

ISSN 2395-5171

**JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES  
AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH (JHSSR)**

**Bi-Annual Refereed Journal**

**VOL-V, NO-1 & 2 (Combined), 2019**

---

---

Chief Editor  
*Dr. Deepan Das*  
Editor  
*Dr. Jogesh Das*

---

---



নগৌষ্ঠীয় অধ্যয়ন আৰু গৱেষণা কেন্দ্ৰ  
CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES AND RESEARCH (CESR)

**CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES & RESEARCH (CESR)  
ASSAM**

**JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH (JHSSR):** Vol-V, No-1 & 2 (Combined), 2019 –Bi-Annual Refereed Journal published by Centre for Ethnic Studies & Research (CESR), Guwahati-781036 (Assam)

---

<b>Patron</b> <b>Dr. Kiran Hazarika</b>	
Address	Member University Grants Commission, New Delhi & Principal Tengakhat College, Dibrugarh, Assam
<b>Advisory Board</b>	
<b>Prof. Jiten Hazarika</b>	Registrar, Dibrugarh University, Assam
<b>Prof. (Rtd.) Homeswar Goswami</b>	UGC Emeritus Fellow Department of Economics Dibrugarh University, Assam
<b>Prof. Aswini Kr. Mohapatra</b>	Dean, School of International Studies (SIS) JNU, New Delhi
<b>Prof. H. John Sema</b>	Dean, School of Social Sciences Nagaland University, Lumami
<b>Prof. (Rtd.) Ksh Bimola Devi</b>	Department of Political Science Manipur University, Manipur
<b>Prof. (Rtd.) R.K. Satpathy</b>	Department of Political Science NEHU, Shillong
<b>Prof. Ashok Kumar Bora</b>	Department of Geography Gauhati University. Guwahati, Assam
<b>Prof. Padma Prasad Khatiwada</b>	Professor in Population Studies Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
<b>Referral Board</b>	
<b>Prof. Lalrintluanga</b>	Department of Public Administration & Dean, School of Social Sciences Mizoram University, Aizawl
<b>Prof. A.K. Mishra</b>	Professor in Political Science State Nodal Officer, NSS Directorate of Higher & Technical Education Government of Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Prof. D. B. Subedi</b>	Post Doctoral Research Fellow Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education University of New England, Australia
<b>Prof. Pirzada M. Amin</b>	Department of Sociology University of Kashmir
<b>Prof. Prashanta Sharma</b>	Department of Commerce Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam
<b>Prof. Prabin Kumar Gogoi</b>	Department of Education Dibrugarh University, Assam

<b>Prof. Jangkhongam Doungel</b>	Department of Political Science Mizoram University & Fulbright Senior Research Fellow Department of Political Science University of Cincinnati, Ohio State, USA
<b>Dr. R. P. Pradhan</b>	Associate Professor Department of Humanities & Social Sciences BITS PILANI, Goa Campus, Goa
<b>Dr. Jajati K. Pattnaik</b>	Associate Professor Centre for West Asian Studies School of International Studies Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
<b>Dr. Bhupendra N. Goswami</b>	Retired Associate Professor Department of Geography Mariani College, Jorhat, Assam
<b>Editorial Board</b>	
<b>Editor-in-Chief</b> <b>Dr. Deepan Das</b>	
Address	Assistant Professor Department of Political Science R. G. Baruah College, Guwahati, Assam
<b>Editor</b> <b>Dr. Jogesh Das</b>	
Address	Assistant Professor Department of Political Science M.D.K. Girls' College, Dibrugarh, Assam
<b>Members</b>	
<b>Dr. Anil Saikia</b>	Retired Principal Moran College, Moran, Assam
<b>Dr. Om Prakash</b>	Associate Professor School of Social Sciences National Law University, Jodhpur
<b>Dr. Nawaz Khan</b>	HoD & Assistant Professor Department of Mass Communication Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Prof. Jayadeva Sahoo</b>	Co-ordinator, Teacher Education, Faculty of Education and Languages, Rajib Gandhi Central University Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Dr. Paromita Saha</b>	Associate Professor Department of Economics Tripura University
<b>Dr. Padam Nepal</b>	Associate Professor Department of Political Science St. Joseph College, Darjeeling, West Bengal
<b>Dr. Thiyam Bharat Singh</b>	Associate Professor Centre for Study of Social Exclusion & Inclusive Policy (CSSEIP), Manipur University
<b>Dr. Dipen Saikia</b>	Associate Professor Department of Political Science Maridhal College, Dhemaji, Assam
<b>Journal Co-ordinators</b>	
<b>Jyostna Hazarika</b>	Assistant Professor Department of Political Science D.C.B. Girls' College, Jorhat, Assam
<b>Dr. Gargi Phukon</b>	Assistant Professor Department of Assamese Jagiroad College, Jagiroad, Assam

---

The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed and conclusions drawn is entirely that of the author(s) and neither the Editor nor the Editorial Board of the Journal is responsible for them.

# CONTENTS

	<i>Pages</i>
❑ Emotional Intelligence of College Students of Assam – <i>Karabi Kakati</i>	9-12
❑ Environmental Awareness among the College Students of Assam – <i>Dipankar Talukdar</i>	13-16
❑ Women’s Representation in Politics if Assam: A Study of Assembly Elections – <i>Mohan Pathak</i>	17-25
❑ Radhakrishnan’s Concept of Freedom: an Analytical Study – <i>Mauchumi Hazarika</i>	26-31
❑ “Contentious Identity?” Political Renegotiation between the State and Non-Tribals in Assam – <i>Ridip Khanikar</i>	32-51
❑ Traditional Beliefs of Adi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh reflected through Mamang Dai’s Recreation of Folktales – <i>Bulen Chutia</i>	52-59
❑ Status of Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Practices among the Missing Community of Assam: a Case Study of Lezai Kolakhowa Area of Dibrugarh District in Assam – <i>Punya Gogoi</i>	60-63
❑ Climate Change: the Phenomenon, Evidences and Problems of Discourses – <i>Pankaj Roy</i>	64-77
❑ Social Perspective of Medical Science – <i>Abdul Aziz Khan</i>	78-89

- Work Culture and Employee Issue of Assam State Transport Corporation (Astc): a Case Study 90-103  
– *Lenin Gogoi*



## *From the Desk of Editor.....*

The Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research (JHSSR) is a peer-reviewed journal published in English. It is a multi-disciplinary publication dedicated to the scholarly study of all aspects of Humanities and Social Sciences. Particular attention is paid to Philosophy, History, Geography, Political Science, Public Administration, Human Rights, Rural Development, Economics, Commerce, Management, Education, Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work, Mass Communication, Law, Environment and Developmental issues, as well as ethical questions related to scientific and empirical research.

The Journal seeks to encourage comprehensive and critical study and research on the above subjects; to provide a forum for the study of Humanities and Social Sciences in the global context; to promote dissemination, exchange and discussion of research findings; and to encourage interaction among academics from various traditions of learning.

The main objective of the journal is to provide a platform to all social scientists including young scholars for exchange of ideas, interchange of opinions on the issues of the socio-economic, political, ethnocultural and historical problems of India and abroad.

It welcomes articles with rigorous reasoning supported by authentic documents. Papers based on empirical research will be given priority in publication.

It also encourages the inter-disciplinary studies that are accessible to a wider groups of social scientists, young scholars and the policy makers.

The journal will also provide ample scope to research notes, comments, book reviews in Humanities and Social Sciences.

Contributions to the volume poured in from different scholars and well wishers from North East India and abroad. While at the very outset no specific themes were decided upon for the purpose, papers prepared by the scholars according to their own choice covering major contemporary issues in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences are published in this issue.

*Jogesh Das*  
Editor

## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS OF ASSAM**

**Karabi Kakati\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Present Study aimed at studying the emotional intelligence of college students of Assam. A sample of 100 college students, out of which 50 male and 50 female from Provincialised Colleges of Assam was selected. Sample was selected by using stratified random sampling method. The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar was used to assess the emotional intelligence of the sample selected. Data were analysed by using statistical technique like mean, SD and t-test. Data revealed that College students differ significantly in terms of their level of emotional intelligence when compared on the basis of gender.

**(Key words:** Emotional intelligence, College Students, Assam)

### **Introduction:**

The twenty first century is characterized by the emergence of multi-culturalism due to industrialization, urbanization, globalization and disintegration in the family system. Present education system focuses mainly on children's cognitive skills from the moment they enter the class room. However, virtually no emphasis is placed on educating the children in the management of their inner conflict and unbalanced emotions they bring with them every day to their institutions. New concepts like 'Emotional Intelligence' now have become more widely understood. Many educators have realised that cognitive ability is not sufficient for today's society. The ability to perceive, control and evaluate emotions in oneself as well as others constitutes emotional intelligence. It shapes our interactions with others and our understanding of ourselves. Emotional intelligence plays a

---

\* Assistant Professor of Education, R. G. Baruah College, Guwahati

determining role in the majority of our daily activities.

College life of an individual is very important for his life. Because from college life he moves into his professional life. With studies continuously proving the important role of emotional intelligence in maintaining a healthy and successful life. It is important that emotional intelligence of the college youth be improved as far as possible so that they may go on to lead harmonious adult lives. Many psychologist and researcher who recognised early those emotional aspects such as feelings, moods and non cognition were equally important.

Thorndike (1920) had long ago identified a dimension of intelligence and named it social intelligence. He described social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations. Wechsler (1940) defined intelligence as the aggregate of global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with the environment. Salovey and Mayer (1990) coined the term emotional intelligence and described it as ‘a form of social of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.

Gender seems to play a crucial role in the level of emotional intelligence among individuals. Thingujam and Ram (2000), Ciarrochi, Chan and Bajgar (2001), Brackette, Mayer and Warner (2003), Nasar and Nasar (2008) reported significantly higher levels of emotional intelligence among females as compared to males. In contrast, findings of studies by Uma Devi and Rayal (2004), Mishra and Ranjan (2008) and Carr (2009) indicated significantly higher Emotional Intelligence levels among males in comparison with female.

### **Objective of the Study:**

To compare the emotional intelligence of male and female college students.

### **Hypothesis:**

There is no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male and female college students.

## **Method:**

Descriptive Survey method of research was adopted for conducting the present study.

## **Sample:**

A sample of 100 college students was taken as sample of the study by using stratified random sampling technique. Out of which 50 male and 50 are female. The sample was collected from colleges affiliated to Gauhati University.

## **Tool:**

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyoti Petha and Upinder Dhar was used. It consists of 34 items spread across 10 constituent factors of emotional intelligence. While low scores on the EIS indicate low emotional intelligence, high scores on the EIS show high EQ of the subject. The minimum score on the EIS is 34 while maximum score is 170.

## **Procedure:**

All the sample subjects were requested to fill the Emotional Intelligence Scale. The data so collected was analysed using mean, SD and t-test.

## **Results and Discussion:**

The result reveals that there is a significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male and female college students. In the area of Self awareness ( $t=3.13$ ), Emotional stability ( $t=3.30$ ) and Self development (2.87) gender differences are found to be statistically significant. On the other hand in all other seven areas of emotional intelligence (i.e. Empathy, Self motivation, Managing relations, Integrity, Value orientation, Commitment and Artistic behaviour) the differences are to be insignificant. Hence, there is significant difference of emotional intelligence of male and female college students of Assam. As such the null hypothesis stating "There is no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male and female college students" is rejected.

From the above discussion it is evident that emotional intelligence of male and female college students is different.

## Conclusion:

The new theoretical and conceptual development in the field of educational psychology in recent decades, namely; emotional intelligence provides great opportunity to enhance the quality of education in terms of 'learner centered' practices. Emotional Intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves in our relationships. From the present study it can be concluded male and female college students in Assam differ significantly in the level of their emotional intelligence.

## Notes & References:

1. Anu, G.S. (2010); '*Developing an Emotional Intelligence Enhancement Package for Primary School Students with special reference to Emotional Competences*', Ph.D. Thesis, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala.
2. Bansibihari, P. & Pathan, G.Y. (2004); '*Emotional Intelligence of Secondary Teachers*', *Edutracks*, **4(4)**:23-25
3. Basu,S. & Jyoti. (2016); '*Emotional Intelligence of College Students*', *Psycho-Lingua*, **44 (1)**: 47-50
4. Kapp, C.A. (2002); '*Emotional Intelligence and Success in Post-graduate Studies: A Pilot Study*', *SA Journal of Higher Education*, **14(3)**: 151-160
5. Pandey,K. (2006); '*Deprivation among Emotionally Intelligent Girls*', *Journal of Educational Studies*, **4 (1&2)**, 9-16.



## **ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS OF ASSAM**

**Dipankar Talukdar\***

### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was aimed at investigating the environmental awareness among the college students. The study was carried out on a sample of 200 students (100 male and 100 female) from the colleges of Kamrup Metro districts of Assam. Self constructed questionnaire was used to collect the data for the study. Descriptive survey method was applied as a method of study. The data was analysed by using statistical measures, Mean, SD, t-test and percentage. The findings of the present study reveal that there exist significant difference among the Boys and Girls regarding environmental awareness.

**Key Words:** Environmental Awareness, College Students, Kamrup Metro Districts

### **Introduction:**

With the development of science and technology, environmental degradation is increasing in the whole world. The land, air, water, soil are increasingly becoming polluted. Both developing and developed countries are facing serious environmental problems. The large scale of environmental degradation has caused a global concern. The major cause of the problem is low level of awareness among the people. So, it is prime responsibility of educated society to aware about the environment.

Kothari commission mentioned that the destiny of nation is being shaped in her class room. The main purpose of environmental education is to acquaint and sensitise the young school and college students.

---

\* Assistant Professor of Education, R. G. Baruah College, Guwahati

Environmental awareness can be provided among youth through formal and informal system of education by introducing various programmes.

Seth and Basu (2014) studied on environmental awareness, attitude and responsibility among secondary school students. They also reported in their study that the extend of environmental awareness among secondary school students is moderate. Verma and Sharma (2015) mentioned in their study that to achieve the objectives of environmental ethics education, a teacher has to play an important role. Sekhon and Kaur (2015) studied on environmental management declaration and role of higher educational institution. They reported in their study that the higher educational institutions should emphasise on development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation and commitment to work individually and collectively towards solutions of current problems.

The present study emphasised on environmental awareness among the college students.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To study the environmental awareness among the college students.
2. To compare the environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender.

### **Hypothesis:**

There is no significant difference of environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender.

### **Research Method:**

In the present study the investigator employed descriptive survey method

### **Sample:**

All the undergraduate students of colleges affiliated to Gauhati University in the Kamrup (M) Districts constituted the population for the present study. The investigator randomly selected 200 students equally from five colleges as sample of the study. Out of which 100 are Girls and 100 are Boys students.

**Tools:**

A self constructed questionnaire was used as a tool of the study.

**Analysis and Interpretation:**

Objective No. 1: To study the environmental awareness among the college students

In order to study the environmental awareness among the college students the investigator collected the data with the help of the questionnaire. The data revealed that 60% students have awareness about the environment. They are very conscious and they have positive attitude towards their environment. On the other hand 40% students are not totally aware about the environment. Their behaviour is not eco friendly.

Objective No. 2: To compare the environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference of environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender.

In order to compare the environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender, the investigator applied t test. The result are presented in the table 1:

Sl.No.	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Status
1	Boys	100	10.2	1.40	5.52	Significant
2	Girls	100	14.8	1.58		

From the above table it has been found that there is significant difference between boys and girls regarding environmental awareness. The calculated t value is found 5.52 which are significant at 0.01 level of significant. Hence, hypothesis is rejected and it can be interpreted that there is significant difference of environmental awareness among the college students in relation to gender.

**Findings of the Study:**

On the basis of the present study, the following findings were reached upon:

1. The environmental awareness among the college student is moderate. Only 60% students are aware about the environment. They have positive attitude towards environment
2. The environmental awareness among the boys and girls differ significantly.

### **Conclusion:**

Higher educational institutions are expected to imply the appropriate knowledge and values to deal with the complex problem of the society. Environmental education is not a theoretical knowledge, it is useful only when this applied to daily life situation. Teacher can give emphasise in developing moral values and sense of responsibility to the student. Thus, students must have awareness about environment and problems associated with it so that they can play their role very effectively.

### **Notes & References:**

1. Sekhon, S. & Kaur, A.P.H. (2015); '*Environmental Management Declaration and Role of Higher Educational Institutions*', *University News***53(29)**: 23-26
2. Seth, T. & Basu, S. (2014); '*Environmental Awareness, Attitude and Responsibility among Secondary School Students*'. *Psycho-Lingua***44(1)**: 60-63.
3. Sharma, R.A. (2008); '*Environmental Education. Meerut: Vinay Rahheja*.
4. Verma, A.K. & Sharma, K. (2015); '*Environmental Ethics Education: Need and Role of Teachers*'. *Psycho- Lingua***45(1)**: 57-59



## **WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS OF ASSAM: A STUDY OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS**

**Mohan Pathak\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Political Representation is a pivotal concept of the parliamentary democratic system. In every democracy the equal representation of men and women is essential. But it has been seen that women all over the world always kept out from the political realm. Gender-based discrimination in politics is found in most of the country of the world. Likewise in India also the political representation of women is quite grim. Even though civil society provides ample opportunity for Women to participate in socio-cultural activities of the country, still their role in representation politics is very unsatisfactory. Women in India still face a lot of challenges in political representation. The obstacles such as the patriarchal structure of society, illiteracy, the subjugation of Men on socio-economic life plays a significant role in poor representation of women in politics. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to analyze the representation of women in the assembly elections of Assam. Moreover, this study also provides some recommendations for the improvement of women's representation in politics.

**Key Words:** Politics, Representation, women, Assam.

### **Introduction:**

Political Representation is a pivotal concept of the parliamentary democratic system. In every democracy the equal representation of men and women is essential. But it has been seen that women all over the world always kept out from the political realm. Gender-based discrimination in politics is found in most of the country of the world. Hence, political

---

\* *Research Scholar, Deptt. of Political Science, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh*

empowerment of women is very necessary to extend them equal status in every sphere of society. No society can claim that it has given equal status to its women unless give them equal political power at all level.

Likewise in India also the political representation of women is quite grim. Even though civil society provides ample opportunity for Women to participate in socio-cultural activities of the country, still their role in politics is very unsatisfactory. Although women of India constitute almost 50 percent of population but they are still deprived from political power in the true sense (Chakarbaty, 2012:1). If we look the representation of women in last three general elections of India we have an idea about the actual condition of women in political representation. It is found from the ECI report that in 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections the total representation of women was only 52, which constitute 9.51 percent of the house, likewise in 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections the total representation of women was 64, which constitute 11.7 percent of the house, In recent Lok sabha elections the total women representation was 78, which constitute 14 percent of the house. Although it is seen that the representation of women is gradually increased but still it is not satisfactory at all.

In the state politics also the conditions of women in political representation is also found very pathetic. According to the ECI report out of total 4896 PMs and MLAs across the country only 418 are women which constitute 9 percent. The ECI report also shows that in term of percentage, among all state assemblies, the highest percentage of women MLA is from Bihar with 14percent (34 out of 243MLAs) followed by Rajasthan with 14 percent(28 out of 200 MLAs). Nagaland and Mizoram are the two states which doesn't have single women representative in their state legislative assembly. Hence it is seen that the condition of women's representations in various state assemblies of India is very unsatisfactory, still women in India face lots of socio-economic as well as political problems in political representation.

The present study is an attempt to analyze the representation of women in the assembly elections of Assam. Moreover, this study also provides some recommendations for the improvement of women's representation in politics of Assam.

## **Objectives of the Study:**

The major objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To understand the actual scenario of women of Assam in political representation.
- To understand the major obstacles of women of Assam in political representation.

## **Methodology of the study:**

The study has been based on historical, descriptive and analytical methods to understand the actual scenario of women of Assam in political representation. The research is totally based on secondary sources of data such as, report of election commission, news papers, books, journals and internet. The statistical tools are also used to make the study fruitful.

## **Discussion:**

Like other state of India in Assam also the condition of women in political representation seen quite pathetic. Though the participation of women in socio-cultural activities of the society seen quite well but in the context of political representation it is found very unsatisfactory. The pattern of political behaviour of women of Assam shaped by their social traditions, customs and economic position (Sarmah, 2010:3).

It is found that during British rule there was reservation of seat for women in legislative assembly of Assam. The government of India act, 1935 provided opportunity for women representation by reservation of a seat in the Assam legislative assembly form shilling constituency. This act also allowed women to contest election not only for reserved seat but also for general seats. In 1937 the two women namely Miss Mavis Dunn and Ka Berlina Diengdoh were contested in election as independent candidates and Miss Mavis Dunn was elected and also became first women representative of state legislative assembly of Assam (Hazarika, 1978:1).

After independence also no any positive change has been seen in political representation of women of Assam. The actual scenario of women's representation in state legislative assembly of Assam can be understood

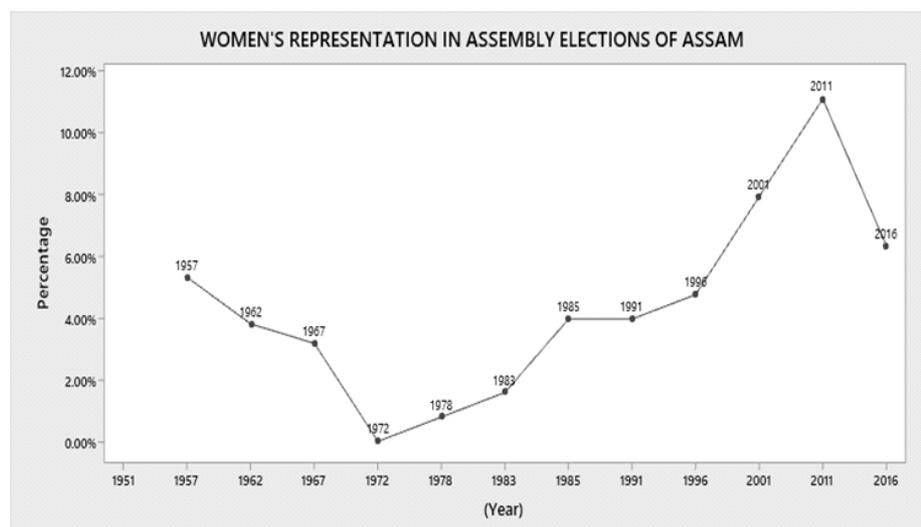
by the table 1.1 stated below.

**Table 1.1**  
**AN OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS OF ASSAM:**

SL. NO.	Assembly Elections (Year)	Total no of seats	No. of Women contestant	No. of Women won	Percentage of Women's Representation
1	1951	91	Data not found	Data not found	
2	1957	94	6	5	5.32%
3	1962	105	4	4	3.81%
4	1967	126	6	4	3.18%
5	1972	126	12	0	0%
6	1978	126	22	1	0.79%
7	1983	126	3	2	1.59%
8	1985	126	29	5	3.97%
9	1991	126	50	5	3.97%
10	1996	126	45	6	4.76%
11	2001	126	55	10	7.94%
12	2006	126	70	13	10.38%
13	2011	126	85	14	11.11%
14	2016	126	92	8	6.35%

*Source: Election Commission of India*

**Figure 1.1**



The table 1.1 clearly shows the pathetic picture of women's representation in various assembly elections of Assam. After independence the first legislative assembly elections of Assam was held in 1951, but due to some reason the data of women representation in this elections is not found. However, in 1957 the second legislative assembly elections was held, where 6 Women contested elections out them only 4 candidates were won which constituted 5.32 percent of the total representatives of Assembly . Likewise in third assembly elections of Assam in 1962 total 4 women were contest and all of them won, which constituted 3.81 percent of the total representatives of the assembly. In 1967 assembly elections of Assam 6 women candidates were contest election out which 4 candidates were elected, which represent 3.18 percent of total members of the Assembly.

A drastic change in women representation in Assam assembly elections has been noticed in 1972. In this election though 12 women candidates contested but no one won the election, which is a very negative picture in Indian democracy. In 1978 elections also 22 women contested and out of them only 1 women won, which constitutes 0.79 percent of the total members of the legislative assembly of Assam. Likewise in 1983 also total 3 women were contest election and out of them 2 were won, which represented 1.59 percent of the total members of the assembly.

In 1985 state legislative elections total 29 women contested and out of them only 5 were elected, which constitutes 3.94 percent of the total members of the assembly. Similarly in 1991 also the 50 women contested election and only 5 of them got elect. In 1996 state legislative election also 45 women were contest and only 6 out of them won, which is only 4.76 percent of the total members of the Assembly.

In 2001 state legislative elections of Assam a drastic change in women representation has been seen, in these elections 55 women were contested and 10 out of them were elected, which constitutes 7.94 percent of the total members of the Assembly, which was quite higher than previous years representation. Same change also has been noticed in 2006 state legislative elections, in this election total 70 candidates were contested elections and out them 13 were elected, which is quite high then previous years representations, in this year the numbers of women representatives constituted 10.38 percent of the total members of the assembly. In 2011

also the women's representation was increased, in this election 85 women contested elections and 14 out of them were elected, which represent 11.11 percent of the total representatives of the assembly. In 2016 recent assembly elections of Assam the representation of women is again decreased, in this election 92 women contested but only 8 out of them were won, which constitutes only 6.35 percent of the total members of the assembly.

Therefore, it is found from the above study that the picture of women's representation in assembly elections of Assam was very unsatisfactory and not a good sign for democracy. The percentage of women's representation was very poor, though in some elections their representation was increased but it didn't cross even 15 percent. So, it can be said that the representation of women in Assam's assembly was totally disappointing.

### **Obstacles in Women's Political Representation in Assam:**

- one of the major factors that act as a hurdle in the political representation of the women of Assam is their heavy involvement mostly in the domestic and household related activities which in turn refrain them from taking an active participation in the political and social structure of the state and as a result of which they lack political exposure under such influence and heavy burden of works. According to the reports of Statistical Hand book of Assam, 2007 only 16.65 percent of women of Assam working in public sector and remaining 83.35 percent of women are busy in their domestic works.

- Lack of political awareness among the women of Assam is another major obstacle affecting the process of political representation in the state because political awareness is the most prominent determinant that determines the political representation of the people of any state and in the absence of it, less political representation of women has become the sad reality in the state of Assam.

- It is also a matter of deep concern that majority of the women living in rural regions are not able to gain meaningful education in the state because of which they are not in a better position to understand all sort of political processes and phenomenon taking place in the state which

ultimately affect their political representation to a large extent. Women of some districts of Assam such as Dhuburi, Kokrajhar and Dhemaji are less aware about politics and most of them don't have any idea about political phenomena.

- It has also been found that the kind of patriarchal nature of society that exists has adversely affected the political representation of the women of Assam. Women don't hold a special position in the social hierarchy and they are also not encouraged by the male members of the society to take active part in politics.

- Many a times, it also happens that women who are capable of playing a major role in political structure don't come to the front which clearly reflects their lack of interests in the field of politics. Therefore, such tendency among the women has also been responsible behind their low level of political representation in the state.

### **Recommendations so as to improve the Political Representation of Women of Assam:**

- Education is one of the most potent weapon in terms of improving the political representation of the women of Assam. A sense of rationality and critical thinking is developed only through the role of education. It is expected that with better education and knowledge about the various issues of the society as a whole, women would be able to actively take part in different political processes and activities of the state on a large scale. Accordingly, it would immensely contribute towards creating a greater political space for the women thereby helping them to occupy a special place in the political structure of the state.

- It is also equally important on the part of every man to recognize the role of women in the society by encouraging them and creating suitable conditions for them in every sphere of activity. There should not be any kind of prejudice and low opinion about the women. At the same time, a massive support from the family is also required in order to enable the women to make independent choices in their lives which will surely prove to be catalyst in improving the political representation of women in the state of Assam.

- The non-governmental organisations and civil society as a whole also have to play greater role by generating a meaningful political awareness and creating a conducive environment to the women of Assam who are presently not able to represent themselves and their interests because of different social constraints. So, the role of civil society is highly imperative when it comes to improving the social and political position of women.

- It is said that economic independence is the basis of the political freedom of the women of any state. Presently, the economic position of the women of Assam is in a state of very bad shape. Thus, improving the livelihood pattern of women and creating better economic opportunities for them is the need of hour so as improve their political status.

- Political socialisation is also one of the means in the process of improving the political position of women in the state of Assam. Right from the very childhood, girls are needed to be politically, socially, and economically educated so that once they grow up, they would not find much difficulties in representing themselves in the political field.

Thus from the above analysis it is quite clear that the political representation of Women in state legislative assembly of Assam is very unsatisfactory. Percentage of Women's representatives is very less compared to Men counterparts and has not been seen showing any sign of improvement. However, the numbers of Women contestant shows an upward trend, but still women's representation but still women's representations has not crossed 11 percent. Therefore, the women's representation in politics is a matter of big concern; hence govt should also address such issue.

### **Notes & References:**

1. Chakrabarty, M. (2012); *WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN ASSAM: A Study. The Indian Journal of Political Science, 73(1), 97-100.*
2. Sarmah, A. (2010); *POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A case study of Bodo Women of Assam. The Indian Journal of Political Science, 71(3), 881-890.*

3. Hazarika, N. (1978); *ROLE OF WOMEN IN STATE POLITICS* (Assam). *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 39(1), 61-78.
4. Government of Assam Transformation and Development Directorate of Economics and Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved June 27, 2020, from <http://des.assam.gov.in/>
5. (n.d.). Retrieved June 27, 2020, from <http://eci.nic.in/>



## **RADHAKRISHNAN'S CONCEPT OF FREEDOM: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY**

**Mauchumi Hazarika\***

### **Introduction:**

The concept of freedom occupies a central place in both traditional and contemporary Philosophy, Indian as well as western. The dictionary meaning of the word 'freedom' is 'state of being free'. It sometimes means absence of the state of bondage. There are two aspects of the problem of freedom viz., one is positive and other is negative. From the positive aspect freedom implies that an individual has the freedom of thought, speech and action, freedom of self determination and self – realization. From the negative aspect freedom is the absence of external and internal restraint imposed by social and political authority. In this sense a man is free if no external authority is forcing him to do something against his will.

The traditional Indian philosophers consider freedom as the ultimate end of human life. They used freedom in the sense of 'freedom from' i.e., freedom from the bondage of the world. The existence in the world is considered as the bondage of the human being. Therefore, so long as one is in the world, he cannot attain freedom according to traditional Indian philosophers. They used various words to mean freedom such as 'Moksa', 'Nirvana', 'Kaivalya', 'Liberation', 'Self- realization' etc. For traditional Indian Philosophers freedom is mostly an ethical and a spiritual concept. But for contemporary Indian philosophers the concept of freedom is not completely ethical, it is also metaphysical. They used the word freedom not only in the sense of 'freedom from' but also in the sense of 'freedom for' and 'freedom to'. Among the contemporary Indian philosophers, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan tries to give a comprehensive view of the notion of freedom in such a way that all aspects of this notion come under it.

### **Objective of the Paper:**

The objective of this paper is to analyse the concept of freedom

---

\* Assistant Professor of Philosophy, DHSK College, Dibrugarh

with an attempt to find out the uniqueness and importance of the notion of freedom in the philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

### **Methodology:**

As the present study is analytical in nature, so mainly descriptive and analytical methods are used in this study. Both primary and secondary data are used in present study. The primary data consist of Dr. Radhakrishnan's writings and the secondary data are used in the form of published materials, books and articles on Dr. Radhakrishnan.

### **Discussion:**

Freedom, normally means not the absence of determinism, but self-determinism. That is why, man's freedom consists of freedom of action and of choice. But this conception of freedom at once meets with difficulties because it ignores the importance and value of influence of environmental and other factors. These difficulties are sought to be removed by Radhakrishnan by providing a special significance to the notion of freedom. According to Radhakrishnan difficulties arise if the notion of freedom is taken only in the sense of 'physical freedom'. For him freedom does not mean only physical freedom but also it means man's capacity to go beyond himself. It is the basic character of the man himself. In whatever way man acts, he has the feeling that he could go still further. Even when he fails to meet a challenge, he has the awareness that it was not impossible for him to meet that. It is observed that there is always an element of dissatisfaction that prevails in man. Since unlike other living beings, man is not 'satisfied into inaction' by satisfying his appetite only. He is always in the look of fresh openings and new adventures. These are all facts of experience happening every day in everybody's life. Therefore, according to Radhakrishnan, Man's freedom lies in his capacity of 'self-transcendence'. This is not determined by any antecedent factors, as it is not possible to determine from before the courses that this capacity will adopt. The finite self is the present actual being while infinite self is his potentiality. The awareness of the potentialities creates an urge in the human mind to transcend himself to the level of infinite being. This urge is rooted at the core of human being and this process continues till the end of life. Therefore self – transcendence does not mean to live in another world. It is a movement of the self from downward to upward. This is possible by

the realisation of one's true being.

According to Radhakrishnan, there is a close relationship between freedom and morality. Man has the capacity to determine whether something is right or wrong. Because, man has rationality which distinguishes man from other animals. Moreover man has the power and freedom to take decisions. Radhakrishnan says, "This power to make a choice makes him a man and distinguishes him from the animal and lends happiness to human life."<sup>1</sup> Actions done by free will is self- determined. When any individual performs an action by his own choice, that action is a self- determined one. Free will is action done by self- determination. Freedom of will is the active side of any individual being. Freedom of will is the freedom of the self. Self determined work means determination to do an act without any external pressure.

Radhakrishnan maintains that, Karma and freedom are compatible to each other. Because, the karmas are karmas performed by the soul. Again, freedom does not mean absence of any determining conditions, it means being determined by nothing else but by oneself. Freedom is self determination and being determined by one's own karma is nothing but self- determination. He says that choice is the element which compels the soul to perform actions freely. If an individual's action is based on individual's own character and inherited tendencies, it cannot be called a free action. He points out that only that action is free or self determined in which the individual employs his whole nature, searches the different possibilities and selects one which commands itself to his whole self. Thus it follows that according to Radhakrishnan choice is intimately related to freedom.

Radhakrishnan argues that man's action is not completely free, it is only God, who is absolutely free. Because, a human's action is motivated by some goals or purposes and therefore, all our actions are determined by some external goals. In spite of this our actions are also governed by our past. If man were completely free from their past deeds, there remains no moral responsibility on them. Therefore, no action is absolutely free either in human or in the external world. There is the continuity of the past in the present and present conditions in the future. Man cannot ignore the past but he can utilise it for self- development. There is order and regularity in the universe and one is compelled and determined to a great extent but

one has also sufficient scope and freedom for performing actions. He maintains that life is like a game of cards, where the cards are distributed to us and we are determined by them. But the victory depends on one's playing the cards. A good player by examining the different alternatives and discovering right actions for victory utilizes his cards in the best manner. A bad player however in spite of having good cards may not be able to utilize or skilfully handle them in the play. At the beginning a player is more free. He may start from any point, but gradually his actions get determined as the play develops. Similarly we are determined in our actions by our past habits, character, mode of thinking, sentiments and inherited tendencies but we are free to play our parts by making the best of what we have in possession. Radhakrishnan says, "Life is like a game of bridge. The cards in the game of life are given to us. we do not select them. They are all traced to our past karma, but we are free to make any call as we think fit and lead any suit- and that is freedom."<sup>2</sup>

According to Radhakrishnan freedom is the intrinsic nature of human being. He says that human reality gets its meaning in freedom. Human being on the one hand free and on the other he is determined. Man is empirically bound, but transcendently free. He is determined by his past karmas and also by his physical, biological and environmental conditions, which has meaning only in relation to the empirical world. But at the same time man is free to perform his activities and make his future plan according to his will. Man is free in his choice of action. By exercising his choice man can control all the elements of nature and can do work according to his necessity. Radhakrishnan says, "Our life is a mixture of necessity and freedom, Chance and Choice. By exercising our choice properly, we can control steadily all the elements and eliminate altogether the determinism of nature."<sup>3</sup>

Radhakrishnan says that true freedom must come from within. There is no existence of freedom outside the human being. Man is potentially divine and he is free to realize his divinity present in him. It is not possible to express the deepest self without exercising proper freedom. Man can make communion with the higher and deeper self only in the state of freedom. Radhakrishnan writes, "It is only in the moments of Supreme freedom that we are or get near to the deepest self in us."<sup>4</sup> Realization of

Absolute freedom is nothing but an attainment of highest goal and it is the state of liberation itself. In this state of freedom man can enjoy eternal peace and joy and also feel oneness with the Supreme. But the attainment of absolute freedom does not negate the phenomenal world. According to Radhakrishnan the distinction between freedom of self and the freedom of will may sometimes creates confusion in the problem of human freedom. Regarding this problem Radhakrishnan argues that the will is only the self in its active side and freedom of will really means the freedom of the self which is the determination by the self.

It may be argued that self determination cannot be regarded as the real freedom of the self, because it means that the self is determined by his past karmas, heredity and also by external environment. But Radhakrishnan maintains that, “The self represents a form of relatedness or organisation, closer and more intimate than that which is found in animal, plant and atom. Self determination means not determination by any fragment of the self nature but by the whole of it. Unless the individual employs his whole nature, searches the different possibilities and selects one which commends itself to his whole self, the act is not really free.”<sup>5</sup> Of course Radhakrishnan says that human self is determined by some limitations. Although human being has some limitations yet his freedom of choice and self- effort lead him to go ahead of himself by overcoming all limitations.

### **Conclusion:**

Radhakrishnan’s concept of freedom is spiritual. It distinguishes man from other animals. Thus we find that in the view of Radhakrishnan, man’s existence includes the power, the determination to stand out of existence and the truth of beings. He says that human life is based on certain ideals and these ideals are invariably the ideals of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. Radhakrishnan’s concept of freedom is depicted in his line of thought, when he says, “The very effort of man to know the secret of nature, to sit in judgement on it, indicates his participation in this creative process.” All these imply that Radhakrishnan’s concept of freedom is actually the freedom from physical existence and the attainment of the highest spiritual existence i.e., moksa.

**Notes & References:**

1. S. Radhakrishnan; *Religion and Society*, p.<sup>55</sup>
2. S. Radhakrishnan; *An Idealist View of Life*, p.<sup>286</sup>
3. S. Radhakrishnan; *The Bhagavad Gita*, p.<sup>49</sup>
4. S. Radhakrishnan; *An Idealist View of Life*, p.<sup>156</sup>
5. Ibid. ....p.<sup>220</sup>
6. S. Radhakrishnan, *Occasional Speeches and Writings*, p. <sup>256</sup>



**“CONTENTIOUS IDENTITY?”  
POLITICAL RENEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE STATE AND  
NON-TRIBALS IN ASSAM**

**Ridip Khanikar\***

**ABSTRACT**

The ongoing political wrangling between the state and Assam’s six non-tribal groups over Scheduled Tribes (ST) status to the latter has not only influenced the entire spectrum of state politics, but has also marked a paradigm shift in the identity discourse from tribals to non-tribals. Their identity assertions in fact, have reaffirmed many issues, including indigeneity and cultural revival, which had previously been analysed in the context of Assam’s tribes (Plains+Hills). In Assam, non-tribal identity movements have reflected two things: first, reviving their ethnic history with a full statement of their sociopolitical marginality, and second, providing them with a safe space in the domains of society-politics and the state economy. The case of Chutias, who demand a significant share of the state’s larger non-tribal identity discourse, has received little research attention. The state’s political bargaining in response to the Chutias demands has resulted in a number of ethnic squabbles and academic debates. The state’s plains tribal groups have certain reservations to the demands of six non-tribal groups, including the Chutias, for constitutional recognition of their indigeneities, which has added a new dimension to the debate.

This paper therefore, has two goals: first, to contextualize the issues that have led to the assertiveness of marginalized identities such as Chutias. Second, the paper attempts to examine the state of political bargaining between the state (including both state and non-state agencies) and the Chutias

---

\* *Astt. Professor of Political Science, Sarupathar College, Golaghat*

regarding the latter's identity. In this context, the cases of the other five ethnic groups are also attempting to make reference alongside the Chutias.

**Acknowledgement:** I would like to thank Dr. Harsha S., Assam University Silchar for his invaluable comment, criticism and guidance provided during the work.

### **The Prelude:**

The assertion of identity by Chutias and five other non-tribal groups in Assam has added a new dimension to the state's identity politics. Politically, they have become a decisive force in state elections because they represent a sizable portion of the population in both upper and lower Assam. The government of Assam and other political parties have begun to regard their demands as urgent. The identity assertions of these six Assamese groups were viewed as a decisive factor in winning the highly anticipated legislative elections in Assam, which were held in 2016 and 2021, respectively. The BJP's stunning victory in the 2014 general elections highlighted the growing political importance of Assam's six ethnic groups, as the party has made the ST issue of six non-tribal groups one of its main political commitments (Goswami & Tripathi, 2015). The party if would come to power would have promised ST status to the groups. Furthermore, their assertions for ST status have not only influenced the politics of Assam but also marked a paradigm shift of the discourse of identity politics from tribals to the non-tribals. Notably, among the six non-tribal groups, the Chutia community has also been asserting for ST status along with many other socio-political and economic demands.

### **Capitalizing History: Making and Remaking Identity Demands:**

The Chutias are an aboriginal ethnic group of Assam (Acharyya, 1992: 222; Baruah, 1993). In the Deori-Chutia language (dialect) the meaning of the word 'Chutia' is - *chu/soo* means 'gentle', *'ti'* means 'high' and *'ya'* means 'land': 'gentlemen living in the high land' (Baruah, 2012: 807). Racially, Chutias, a majority of those who reside in the Brahmaputra Valley are of mongoloid origin. Their native language is closely akin to the languages spoken by Bodos and the Deories (Baruah, 1993). In many official records<sup>1</sup> of the British Indian Government, they were classified with the tribes of the Brahmaputra Valley, like the Rabhas, Kacharis, Mikirs

and Lalungs. According to E.T. Dalton<sup>2</sup>, their original habitation was in the hills up (i.e. east) the river Suvansiri in the present Arunachal Pradesh. Later on, they crossed the river, migrated towards the east to Sadiya. They founded a kingdom at Sadiya in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which covered the major parts of present-day districts of Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar and Lakhimpur and parts of Arunachal Pradesh. A place called Kundil near Sadiya still bears the archaeological remains of their capital (Baruah, 1993). At present, the Chutias are mostly concentrated in the region of upper Assam, mainly, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat and Nagoan of the south bank and Lakhimpur, Sonitpur and Dhemaji districts of the north bank of the Brahmaputra. According to a report prepared by Ismail Husain and Purna Bora<sup>3</sup>, there are many Chutia villages in other districts of Assam too, including Cachar of Barak Valley<sup>4</sup>, as also in Meghalaya<sup>5</sup>, Tripura<sup>6</sup> and Bangladesh.<sup>7</sup>

Birpal was the founder King of the Chutia kingdom that existed from 1189 to 1524 A.D. Ratnadhaj Pal, who is said to be born with the grace of Lord Kubera, established the powerful Chutia kingdom at Sadiya. Thus, from 1189 to 1524 A.D., seventeen kings had ascended the throne of the Chutia kingdom (Baruah and Nath, 2007: 45; Acharyya, Ibid). When the Ahoms came to Assam, the Chutias were the most powerful tribe in the east and the former avoided clashes with them. About three hundred years later, taking advantage of some internal disorder in the Chutia kingdom, the Ahom king Suhungmung Dihingia (1497-1539 A.D.) defeated the Chutias and annexed their kingdom in 1523 A.D. Suhungmung disbanded the Chutia nobility and established them at different places with a view to prevent their rebellion in future (Baruah, 1993).

However, the fall of the Chutias greatly impaired their elements of aristocracy as well as their population, as the emigrants intermarried with the people amongst whom they were settled. Many of them were assimilated and converted to other ethnic folds. It is for this reason that some people among the neighbouring hill tribes like Nagas, Khasis Jayantiyas, Misings etc. used to claim affinity with the Chutias and identified themselves as Naga Chutia, Mising Chutia and Khasi Chutia. So, looking at their infused identities, the British divided them in 1881 into four cultural groups namely–Hindu-Chutia, Deori Chutia, Borahi Chutia, and Ahom Chutia (Baruah, 1993; Baruah & Nath, 2007: 229). This division does not hold relevance in

recent times because all Chutias now introduce themselves simply as Chutia. The Borahis, as a result, are now almost extinct. The Deoris, on the other hand, have already included in the Plains Scheduled Tribal List of Assam. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that according to the 1921 population census of India, Chutias were recorded as a tribe of Assam plains. It was only in the 1931 census that they were omitted from the list of tribes (Baruah, 1993). Since the social status of the caste-Hindus was far superior to that of a tribal identity they preferred to introduce themselves as caste-Hindus rather than as tribals. Besides, the tribal status did not carry any benefit or privilege at that time. On the other hand Deoris, the priestly section of the Chutias, were referred to as tribes, because they retained the animistic cult practices and the original language.

The growing consciousness for reviving as well as preserving their linguistic originality has revealed an important dimension of the Chutia identity assertion. In fact, language is the basic component of an ethno-cultural identity. It is notable that like many other groups, Chutias also lost their original language in due course of time. In the census report of 1921, it was noted that ‘the Chutia language appears to have been the only language in existence at the period of the advent of Ahoms to Assam’.<sup>8</sup> As G. R. Grierson wrote, “the Chutia indeed, may fairly claim to be the original language of upper Assam”.<sup>9</sup> W. B. Brown wrote, “The people are generally called Deoris simply the language is more popularly known as Chutia”.<sup>10</sup> However, the Deori-Chutia language is a sub-branch of the greater Chin-Tibetan Language family.<sup>11</sup> Thus, there is a close relationship among Tiwa (Lalung), Deori and Kachari languages which signifies that they have originated from the same linguistic fold (Bodo).<sup>12</sup> Of course, at present none of the Chutias speak the existing Deori dialects. However, efforts have been continuing for reviving the original Deori-Chutia language. For that *Deori-Chutia Chu Lebaku* (Deori-Chutia Language Development Committee) was formed and has been actively engaged in the task. Besides language, the community has also lost many other socio-cultural traits with the passage of time and assimilated itself to the larger Assamese culture. This assimilation is not a problem for the Chutias at present. Notwithstanding, staying amid the larger Assamese identity, the Chutias seek to revive, preserve and develop their ethno-cultural traits. For that, they have organized and observed their cultural events, customs and

traditions at regular intervals. Hence, the process of remaking the identity is revealed in the issue of Chutia identity assertion.

Like culture, economic conditions of a group also matter a lot in losing or reviving the ethno-cultural identity consciousness. Chutias are essentially agriculturalists and like other ethnic groups of Assam they also produce paddy in their fields. In comparison to other advanced non-tribal groups of Assam, as the Chutia ethnic leaders claim, their economic conditions are much deplored. If there is any community-wise economic census in Assam, it will bring light into their poverty and hardship. Accordingly, only a few sections of them are industrialists, businessmen and in government service. Unemployment is highly visible among the educated youth of the community. In the field of education also, the community cannot move forward hand in hand with the other advanced non-tribal groups of the state. The persons holding top offices from the community are few and far between (Baruah, 1993).

Furthermore, as argued by Chutia ethnic organizations<sup>13</sup> specially the All Chutia Caste Conference, Assam (ACCCA) and All Assam Chutia Student Union (AACSU), their community is politically less represented in comparison to other communities of the state. They are proportionally under-representation in the state legislature as well as the parliament. In contrast to their population, their representation in the Assam Legislative Assembly (ALA) is very less. Their representation in the State Cabinet as well as the Parliament is hardly visible too. The Chutia organizations also argue that their race is considered one of the major dynastic races in the history of medieval Assam along with the Kachari, Koch and Ahoms and till today none from the Chutia community has become the Chief Minister of Assam, when the state has had many Chief Ministers who belonged to the other three dynastic races. For instance, Hiteswar Saikia and Tarun Gogoi from the Ahoms, Bisnuram Medhi from the Koch Rajbongshi and Jogendra Hazarika from the Kacharis ruled the state as Chief Minister (Sarmah, 2007: 513). Hence, to get due representation in the state politics and to revive their ethno-cultural heritage, the Chutias have been demanding more politico-economic reservations. Notably, as the community organizations claim, their inclusion in the category like More Other Backward Classes (MOBC) which is now availing to the community is not enough to improve their overall condition.<sup>14</sup>

## **Neglected Indigeneity Costs Ethno- Political Mobilization of the Chutias:**

From the above analysis, it is revealed that the identity assertion of the Chutias has neither developed on a single cause nor within a short-span of time. Rather, a number of socio-economic and political factors have made the Chutias conscious about their identity. However, the Chutias movement is purely an ethnicity-based identity movement which aim is neither for granting autonomy nor for separate state. Unlike the many tribal groups, the Chutias have been asserting purely in democratic ways so that they can protect and enjoy their ethnic group's rights in the state.

As argued by the ACCCA, the community enjoys little development in comparison to other advanced ethnic groups. For instance, in the last three consecutive Assam Legislative Assembly (ALA) elections, including the existing one (i.e. 2001-2006, 2006-2011, 2011-2016) only 2 MLAs belonging to the community were elected. In contrast, many other tribal and non-tribal communities of the state have 3 to 15 MLAs in the ALA. For instance, in the existing ALA, Misings have 3 representatives, Bodos have 12, Ahoms have 12, and Tea Tribes have 6 MLAs respectively. They also argue that all of these aforementioned communities have representatives in the state cabinet also. Thus, up to 2016 the Chutias' representation in the state cabinet is zero. So, according to them, this sort of political negligence has given birth to the feeling of relative deprivation which culminates in the demand like reservation of constituencies where Chutia populations are in majority.

However, as far as the political tradition of the state of Assam goes, the demand for separate constituency for a particular community is quite unreasonable. There are many smaller groups in the state who don't have a single MLA in the ALA. On the lines of the Chutias' demand, they should also get reservation of constituencies. Moreover, in order to become members of the ALA, one has to contest and get elected. But the Chutia leaders are hardly seen contesting elections excluding the Golaghat and Mahmora legislative constituencies which indirectly disapprove the arguments of the organizations.

In terms of the socio-cultural aspect, the Chutias have already lost many of their ethno-cultural traits which set them apart from the others in

course of time and have mingled with the larger Assamese identity. So, the fear of losing their remaining ethno-cultural traits and heritage in the plural socio-political structure of the state has led them to become conscious of their ethnic traits. Of course, it is a common factor of many ethnic identity movements in the north-east of India. As an aboriginal group of the state, the Chutias have a distinct culture and traditions which contribute a lot to the larger Assamese culture. Noteworthy that they had a tribal language which is now spoken by the Deori tribe (Deoris were the priestly clan of the Chutias and the language is popularly known as Deori-Chutia). Besides, the Chutias have distinct cultural attire, food habits, house patterns and many other customs and traditions, which they realize need to be protected as soon as possible. Otherwise, like their language, these cultural traits also may get extinct.

### **Claiming Indigeneity: Role of the Chutia Ethnic Organizations:**

The Chutia organizations have been raising various demands to the state and adopting numerous strategies to put pressure on the state. Initially, they pleaded for free studentship, reservations in jobs in government services, reservations in seats in local legislative bodies as well as in the ALA in order to ensure politico-economic development of the community. In other words, with the growing process of democratization in the colonial British administration, the Chutia leaders aspired for an adequate share in the decision making process of the province. But in the later period, they realized that development of the Chutias was largely dependent on the extent of political powers they could enjoy in the state. For this, they pleaded for minority status with a joint electoral system so that they would have proportional representatives in the provincial legislature of Assam. But their demand was not conceded to.

In the post-independence period, the Chutias have become more concerned about the demands like recognition of their linguistic identity (i.e. *Deori-Chutia language* as their original language), demand for Other Backward Class or OBC, More Other Backward Class or MOBC and later ST status respectively. However, mobilization of a community largely depends on the extent of consciousness of their cultural traits. The Chutia organizations also tried to move on this track. Moreover, it appears to the Chutia leadership that unless they are able to maintain their distinct cultural traits, their movement for constitutional protection of their group's identity

will not succeed.

Inequality in a society breeds enormous dissatisfaction among its people. Inequality in public life has different aspects such as inequality in distribution of economic benefits, inequality in political power sharing and inequality in showing respect to cultural identities of smaller nationalities etc. The question of inequality becomes more sensitive when the ethnic groups examine it on the basis of their relative gains. The case of the Chutia identity echoes a similar logic. In other words, the demands of the Chutia organizations largely reflect the dissatisfaction of their people with the existing unequal distribution of socio-political and economic benefits of the state. As mentioned above, in proportion to their population they are politically under-represented. Educationally they are backward. Culturally, they have lost many of their original traits. So this reality has developed a feeling of relative deprivation among the people of the community. It may, therefore, be observed that the identity consciousness of the Chutias is more than the result of the threat to their cultural traits. The feeling of relative deprivation of their due share of development in the state equally sensitized the Chutias about their identity. Hence, demanding constitutional recognition of their ethnic identity began to be viewed as solution to their identity problems. Notably, since the late 1970s, the Chutias have been demanding ST status and Sixth Schedule status provided for the tribals in the Constitution of India.

However, in comparison to other organizations of the state such as All Bodo Student Union (ABSU), All Assam Koch Rajbongshi Student Union (AAKRASU), All Assam Tai Ahom Student Union (AATASU), Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC), Takam Mising Porim Kebang (TMPK) etc, Chutia organizations are less influential in the politics of the state. Two basic reasons immediately have come to mind for this-

(i) Weak support base of the Chutia organizations and second, the scattered population of the Chutias. None of the Chutia organizations has a strong support base of their population like the aforesaid ethnic organizations have. The various annual conferences of the Chutia organizations have revealed that only a small section of the community is associated with the organizations.

(ii) Except Golaghat constituency (State Assembly), the Chutias do

not have absolute majority in any other constituency of the state. Their population is scattered in all constituencies of upper Assam. Because of the minority ethnic composition, the Chutias do not hold political power in these constituencies. It is a fact that political powers in Assam has been allocated in accordance to the share of population of the various communities. Hence, the majority ethnic groups enjoy more power than the others. For instance, in proportion the Ahoms are in majority in upper Assam, Bodos are in majority in the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD), Misings are in majority in Dhemaji, Jonai and Dhakuakhana, Koch Rajbongshis are in majority in Bongaigoan and Goalpara. Similarly, the Tea Tribes have a strong political hold in the districts of upper Assam as well as Tezpur districts in the north. Accordingly these groups enjoy more political power.

Moreover, there are other reasons too for the marginalization of the Chutia organizations in the politics of the state-i) the Chutia organizations are geographically unrepresentative. ii.) Members are politically affiliated to different political parties and hence their opinions differ from government to government and party to party. iii.) Majority leaders of the Chutia organizations have taken them as pillars of building their personal political careers.

It is well known that at present the Chutias have been demanding ST status along with Sixth Scheduled status. They have realized that if the community is granted ST status then many other cultural and economic demands can automatically be realized. However, originally, the Chutia organizations demanded ST status separately but in 2003 the community came to a consensus with five other cultural groups of the state (they were also demanding ST status separately) and made it a collective demand of all the six. Unfortunately, except some political bargains with the state, the success story of the *Soy Janagusthiyo Aikya Mancha* (a joint collaboration of the six non-tribal groups) is very short. In fact, the *Mancha* is struggling hard to overcome its internal contradictions like–

(i) **Mutual Distrust among the Six Non-tribal Groups:** Its notable here that the *Soy Janagusthiyo Aikya Mancha* was constituted to pressurize the state and central governments for granting them ST status. So the collaboration is of no use in other issues. Each of the six groups has its separate politico-cultural and economic agenda as well as demands, which

sometimes conflicts with those of other groups.

(ii) **Margins vs. Margins: Opposition of the All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS)**<sup>15</sup>. The careful opposition of the AATS to the ST demand of six non-tribal groups has brought the issue into a new light. The All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS) opposition is centered on two arguments- i) they have sought peaceful solution of the ST issue of Assam, but at the same time they need certainty of protection of politico-economic, cultural and educational rights of 14 tribal groups of the plains; ii) They fear that granting ST status to more groups in Assam will jeopardize the interests and political rights of the existing tribal population in the state.

Indeed, the AATS' opposition has made severe impact on the ST movement of the six non-tribal groups of Assam. Analyzing the direct impact of the AATS' stand, two things become clear- i) they help the state to continue its decades-old politics on the issue. The ST issue has become an important source of politics for the political parties as well as ethnic leaders in the state and ii) their opposition helps the state to throw the issue into the public domain for debate. In other words, it encourages the state to turn the issue into a matter of conflict between the plains tribes and six non-tribes. The state cannot grant ST status to the six communities because the existing plains tribes are opposing it. Moreover, AATS opposition has loosened the ethnic collaboration of the six non tribal groups. AATS is quite critical of the ST demand of three groups in particular like the Adivasis as the tea tribes (Adivasis included) are not aborigines of Assam. They migrated from areas like Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa and Chhattisgarh to the state of Assam.<sup>16</sup> They also oppose the ST demands of the Koch Rajbongsis and Ahoms as both are already advanced and dominant communities in the state of Assam.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, they have not directly opposed the demands of three other communities namely the Chutia, Moran and Motaks. It might be because of their non-dominant position in the state politics of Assam. Subsequently, when the Adivasis, Koch Rajbongshis and Ahoms challenged the AATS opposition as baseless, the Chutias, Morans and Motaks played a neutral role.<sup>18</sup> Thus, it increased mutual distrust and decreased the strength of the Soy Janagusthiyo Aikya Mancha.

Thus, despite their contribution towards the development of group

identity of the Chutias, the organizations are being criticized on different grounds. Moreover, they hardly ever have contact with the common Chutia people who are the support base of the movement. Without having a strong support base of the grassroots, the success of a movement is quite difficult.

### **Chutias Bargaining with the State and Vice Versa:**

The role of the state in responding as well as resolving the identity problems of the Chutias is a significant dimension of the study. In terms of response, however, the state governments of Assam have been taking different policies since independence. Immediately after independence, the Chutias did not make any specific ethnic demand. But during that period, Assam had to face a number of secessionist movements from diverse ethnic groups of the then Assam. Among the others, the Nagas' movement for a separate sovereign state was the most prominent followed by the Mizos' extremist secessionist movement. However, unlike them, the non-tribal groups of Assam including the Chutias, did not make any identity demands. It, however, does not mean that the non-tribal ethnic groups did not have any questions regarding their politico-economic conditions and cultural identity.

OBC status was the first demand of the Chutias in post-independence India. Demanding their inclusion into the list of OBCs, the ACCCA submitted a memorandum to the central government's Undeveloped Community Investigation Commission, also known as the Kaka Saheb Kalalkar Commission in 1953. The memorandum was submitted with the words, "*in Assam the Chutia community is the most undeveloped and backward race. Though the Chutias are kept along with the Caste Hindus by the government, but untouchability, inter marriage, inter-dining are still prohibited with others of the Caste Hindus.*"<sup>19</sup> In response, the state government of Assam enlisted the Chutias into the list of OBCs in the later part of the 1960s.

However, inclusion into the list of OBCs did not bring any specific change in the politico-economic lives of the Chutias. This was because their inability to compete with the other comparatively developed groups of the category. As a result, the ACCCA leadership revised their existing demands and claimed the More Other Backward Classes (MOBC) status

(a list of groups having more backward and poor economic records). In 1969, ACCCA submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Assam, Bimala Prasad Chaliha (1957-1970) in this regard.<sup>20</sup> The demands of the memorandum were, “..to declare the Chutias as most backward community, the areas which are majority in population by the inhabitants of the Chutias should be selected...free education to the Chutia students... reservation of seats both in the technical and medical education”.<sup>21</sup> But their MOBC status demand did not get a positive response from the Chaliha-led state government. Again in 1971, another memorandum was submitted to the Chief Minister of Assam. In this, they just reiterated the demands that had been included in the earlier memorandum. In response, however, the Mahendra Mohan Choudhuri-led Government of Assam (1970-1972) enlisted the community into the MOBC list in 1971 (Sarmah, 2007: 534). Unlike the other groups of the list, the Chutias were declared MOBC only in educational aspects. As a result, shifting from OBC to MOBC status did not bring any positive benefit to the community as the latter do not have extra politico-economic reservation. This compelled the Chutia leaders to re-assess their identity demands. Thus, in the late 1970s, their ethnic leadership demanded ST status and Sixth Schedule status provided for the tribals in the Constitution of India.

In response to their ST demand, as assessed by the interviewed Chutia leaders, consecutive state governments of Assam have been taking some half-hearted steps. At one end, the state government expressed its full concern about the ST issue of the six non-tribal groups including the Chutias. On the other, the reports of the state government on the issue have been rejected by the Register General of India or RGI many times. As a result, their demand remains unfulfilled. Apart from the ST demand, the Chutia organizations have been raising many other socio-economic and political demands. These include the demand for naming the fourth bridge over the Brahmaputra by the name of their historic heroin Sati Sadhani, declaration of Sadhani Divas as an official state holiday (7<sup>th</sup> Bohag), building Sadhani Bhavan/statue in every Chutia inhabited district, preservation of Chutia historical monuments, OBC and later MOBC reservations of jobs in government departments, reservations of seats in educational institutions, proportional representation of the Chutias in the state cabinet, reservation of constituencies for the Chutias etc. However,

like the ST status demand, most of these remain unfulfilled.

However, it's true that the state governments of Assam have been sending numerous proposals on granting ST status to the concerned authorities of India. The power of the state government is limited in this regard. For granting ST status, the initial proposal comes from the state government. Then it is examined by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, the Tribal Welfare Ministry and the National Scheduled Tribes Commission. The final call is taken by the Tribal Welfare Ministry, which will have to draft an amendment bill to include the communities in the ST list.

Looking at the importance of the issue, the United Front Government (1996-1998) led by H.D. Deve Gowda then later succeeded by I.K. Gujral issued an ordinance for including the six communities of Assam in the ST list in 1996. The Bill, to this effect, was introduced in the Lok Sabha, but because of opposition from various tribal members including Jayanta Rongpi, the then Speaker P.A. Sangma set up a Parliamentary Select Committee under the chairmanship of MP Amar Rai Pradhan to investigate in the issue. The Parliamentary Select Committee, in its report, recommended that not only the Koch Rajbongshi community, status of other communities including the Chutia, Motak, Moran and Tai Ahom be changed to MOBC and then to ST. In other sense, it suggested that all the communities in the OBC and MOBC lists be included in the Scheduled List.<sup>22</sup> But the government did not implement the recommendations of the Committee due to the opposition of the tribal leaders and groups of the Assam. Besides, the union government might have feared that if the six groups of Assam were granted ST status then it would encourage other ethnic groups whose demands were pending at different levels of procedure to be raised.

As the media had reported, the RGI had rejected Assam Governments' proposal as many as eight times till August 2013.<sup>23</sup> The main argument of rejection of their proposals is the non-fulfillment of the required five constitutional criteria namely indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large and backwardness.<sup>24</sup> Subsequently, the issue has now become politically sensitive. In fact, giving ST status to six non-tribal groups has been a demand of the pro-talk faction of the United Liberation Front

of Assam or ULFA, which raised the issue during peace talks with the Centre in 2013 and later it was supported by the Chief Minister of Assam.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, legislators of Assam across political lines joined hands on 10 November, 2014 to press Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh to recognize the six communities of the state as Scheduled Tribes. A 12-member delegation, led by the Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly Pranab Gogoi, called on Rajnath Singh at North Block and submitted a memorandum seeking ST status for the Koch-Rajbongshi, Tai Ahom, Moran, Matok, Chutia and Tea tribe communities, whose demand has been rejected for years because they do not “fulfill certain criteria”.<sup>26</sup> The delegation felt that the ST status and Sixth Schedule status would keep the illegally settled Bangladeshi immigrants at bay as ST status would ensure land rights for the tribes, prevent alienation of land and ensure greater number of reserved seats for the communities in the Assam Legislative Assembly. The delegation also felt that recognition of these communities as ST is important not only for these groups but also for the entire state.<sup>27</sup>

On December 10, 2007 the Government of Assam decided to constitute development councils for six non-tribal groups of the state. Addressing a press conference, Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi informed that there would be six development councils for the six non-tribal groups- Moran, Matok, Adivasi, Tai-Ahom, Koch Rajbongshi and Chutia.<sup>28</sup> To examine and work out the details for creation of separate development councils, the state government constituted a Cabinet Sub-committee vide notification<sup>29</sup> under the chairmanship of P. Majhi, the then Minister of Planning & Development.<sup>30</sup> After studying the matter, the Cabinet Sub-committee suggested the state government to constitute separate development councils for the six non-tribal groups of the state including the Chutias. On the basis of that recommendation, the Chutia Development Council or the CDC was constituted on 12.11. 2010 for formulation and finalization of Development Council for providing maximum participation of community within the framework of constitution of India for Socio-Economic, Educational, cultural and ethnic advancement of the people of the community in the state of Assam.<sup>31</sup> However, it is pertinent to mention here that the development councils are non-statutory in status. They are not constituted under any law passed by the Assam Legislative Assembly. Rather, they have been constituted on the basis of the recommendation of a cabinet sub-committee of the Government of Assam. Moreover, the

undemocratic composition of the CDC caused resentment among a section of the Chutias. It is notable here that the members, including the chairman of the CDC, are not elected rather selected by the state government from its own party supporters. The Chutia organizations also vehemently opposed the CDC.

Examining its status, functions and suitability, it is quite difficult to assess whether the approach of development councils of the state government is positive for resolving the problems. Rather, political appeasement of the people for gaining electoral support was the primary goal behind development councils. It became apparent when the six non-tribal groups including the Chutias had decided to oppose vote bank politics of the state government made through the institution of development councils.<sup>32</sup> They accused the Congress-led state government (2006-2011) of not addressing their ST demand with priority. They collectively threatened the state government to oppose the forthcoming legislative assembly elections of the state that were to be held in 2011. However, when the Congress party published its election manifesto and gave priority to the ST demand of the six non-tribal groups, they withdrew their proposed anti-Congress campaign.<sup>33</sup>

In August 2013, by setting at rest all speculations over granting ST status to the six communities of the state, Dr. Monmohan Sing-led UPA Government (2009-2014) again rejected the ST demand of six non-tribal groups of Assam including the Chutias. As the media reported, the proposal sent by the same Congress- led state government (2011-continue) of Assam could not fulfil the constitutional criteria for identifying them as ST.<sup>34</sup> As the news spread, the organizations of the Chutias, along with the others, came out on the street. They made public rallies, declared a *bondh* and criticized the state government as anti-indigenous. Subsequently, they criticized the state government for neglecting their longstanding demands. The six non-tribal groups threatened to play an anti-Congress role in the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Shabha elections which were to be held in June 2014. As a result, the then Union Minister of Tribal Affairs of the erstwhile UPA Government (2009-2014) V. Kishore Chandra Deo was compelled to give his personal assurance to review the ST status demand of the six non-tribal groups with larger interest. Besides, Deo also assured the agitating organizations to take all possible measures regarding their ST status demand, if he could

get proper information from the Government of Assam.<sup>35</sup>

However, just after the 16<sup>th</sup> General Elections of the country held in 2014, the ST issue of the six non-tribal groups of the state took a new shape. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), following its election manifesto's promise, has taken an initiative to consider the demands of the six non-tribal ethnic groups of Assam. The newly elected Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, has ordered the concerned Ministry of his Government to fulfill all the required formalities for granting ST status to these six ethnic groups of Assam.<sup>36</sup> Subsequently, responding to matter quickly, the tribal groups of Assam have expressed their tactical opposition to the ST status being given to the six non-tribal groups.<sup>37</sup> The tribal groups under the banner of All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS) invited protest meetings at different locations in the state. According to reports in the media, on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2014, the AATS and the Tribal Youth League convened a joint meeting of the tribal groups of Assam in Guahati. Many organizations of the tribal communities like Bodo, Mising, Rabha, Tiwa, Karbi, Dimasa etc. of the state attended the meeting. The tribal leaders consist of both hill and plains thoroughly discussed the ST demands of the six ethnic groups of the state and its consequences. Attending a press conference after the meeting, the General Secretary of the AATS, Aditya Khaklari said that they have sought peaceful solution of the longstanding ST demands of the six groups. At the same time, they had sought protection of politico-economic, cultural and educational rights of 14 existing tribal groups of the plains. In that context they have demanded to clarify the policy of the new union government regarding ST arrangement of six ethnic groups before the AATS.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, continuing their opposition to the decision of the union government, AATS organized a protest meeting at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on 12 July, 2014.<sup>39</sup> Thus, their opposition has brought the entire issue into a new debate and the matter is still unresolved.

### **The Epilogue:**

The whole analysis about the Chutias' identity assertion makes it clear that their identity problem is one of the major issues of the present state of Assam. The Government of Assam has to find a durable solution of their identity problem with priority. The causes of the Chutia identity movement, as the above analysis establishes, is rooted in the oppressed, unequal and discriminatory socio-economic and political structure of the

state. Since independence, the Chutias have been raising various demands to the state. The consecutive Assam state governments, in response, have given them OBC and later MOBC status. But these measures could not represent the actual demands of the Chutias. Moreover, in 2010 the state government of Assam constituted a Development Council named Chutia Development Council for spearheading the development of the community. But the issue of the Chutias' identity problems has not been resolved so far.

Therefore, looking at the difficulties in resolving the Chutias' identity problem the way that the state governments of Assam have been doing so far, it can be suggested here a few alternate policies. Development and good governance are the important prerequisites in this context. Equitable distribution of development funds to every development block and strict monitoring over implementation of the funds is the primary condition of equal development of the region as well as the people of the state. Accountability and transparency of government policies and funds have to be maintained strictly.

Over the years, the composition of the Assamese society has changed drastically, especially with the inflow of migrants. Changing demographics have led the indigenous communities to feel threatened in terms of economic and political well-being. Also, they fear that their indigenous heritage, customs and traditions, their identity, will get lost in the fast-changing society. Hence, a number of identity movements have begun, both violent and constitutional. The major demand of these movements has been ST status for protection, which seems to be a valid constitutional guarantee. It provides an assurance of preservation and development of ethno-cultural heritage as well as economic and political protection of the group. In this light, the identity movement of the Chutias is nothing but an offshoot of the larger changes taking place in the state and deserves urgent, positive solution within the valid constitutional framework.

### **End notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> Report on the Census of Assam, 1881, pp. 75-76; Report on the Census of Assam, 1891, vol. I, Shillong, 1992, p. 233, WW Hunter, A Statistical Account of Assam Reprint 1975, p. 34; B C

- Allen, Assam District Gazetteers, vol. VII, Lakhimpur, Calcutta 1905, p. 19, Cited here from K. Baruah (2012). *Aitihāsik Bibortanat Asomar Chutia Janagusthi*. Gohpur: Kiran Prakash. p. 647
- <sup>2</sup> E T Dalton, Notes on the Chutias of Upper Assam. Cited here from K. Baruah (2012). *Ibid.*, p. 647
- <sup>3</sup> Cited from D. Sarma (2006). *Chutia Hokolor Atmo Porichitir Songramor Ek Sotika*. Jorhat: Akolobya Prakashon. p.42
- <sup>4</sup> Borgul, Vitorgul, Tarapur, Koijajani, Chaligram, Sudorsonpur, Konapur, Naturbondh, Gumra, Adorkona, Borthom, Borgul, Alkharagul, Majergul, Kacharigoan, Ghilaijan, Anglabajar, Elam, Mobakdoma and Darakapur
- <sup>5</sup> Rongamati, Echamati, and Banhtola
- <sup>6</sup> Kanchan and Koylachal
- <sup>7</sup> Ghunirban, Borigoan, Japlung, Lakorpar, Borbhag, Soilachol, Bogai, Turung, Bijoyporua Kanaiag, Borhom, Hijpur, Barpuji, Hatpuli, Borhompur, Jibonpur, Koijam, Batorbhag and Kunepar
- <sup>8</sup> 1921 Census Report, Cited from S. L. Baruah & D. Nath (Eds.), *Ibid.*, p 498
- <sup>9</sup> G R Grierson, 'Tibet- Burman Family-Chutia'. Cited here from K. Baruah (2012). *Ibid.*, p. 737-745
- <sup>10</sup> W. B. Brown, (1895). An Outline Grammer of the Deori Chutia Language Spoken in Upper Assam. Cited here from K. Baruah (2012). *Ibid.*, p. 428
- <sup>11</sup> W. B. Brown, (1895).op cit.; S.K., Chatterjee, "*Kirata-Jana-Kriti*", 1974, P. 22-25. These references are cited from S. L. Baruah & D. Nath (Eds.) 2007). *Ibid*, p. 67
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*,
- <sup>13</sup> The Chutias have four ethnic organizations namely All Chutia Caste Conference Assam (ACCCA), All Assam Chutia Women Conference (AACWC), All Assam Chutia youth Conference (AACYC), and All Assam Chutia Student Union (AACSU).
- <sup>14</sup> Memorandum to Prime Minister of India on Scheduling, 1980. Cited here from K. Baruah (2012). *Ibid.*, p.949 & 967

- 15 AATS is the state's apex tribal body consisted of all existing tribal groups of Assam. Aditya Khaklari is the current General Secretary of the AATS. This organization is working for maintaining cooperation among the tribal groups of the state as well as for protecting their ethno-political interests.
- 16 Amar Asom, 12 July, 2014
- 17 Asamiya Pratidin, 12 July, 2014
- 18 Amar Asom, 14 July, 2014
- 19 Memorandum Submitted to the "Undeveloped Community Investigation Committee", 1953, P-5
- 20 Memorandum on the Demands of Chutias of as a most backward and unrepresented community, Amguri, 1969
- 21 Ibid.,
- 22 The Assam Tribune, August 23, 2013
- 23 The Times of India, Guwahati, Jul 6, 2013
- 24 According to the constitution of India, to recognize any group as ST, the group must fulfil the five criteria namely indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large and backwardness.
- 25 The Times of India, Guwahati, Jul 6, 2013
- 26 The Telegraph, Calcutta, November 11, 2014
- 27 The Economics Times, June 26, 2014
- 28 <http://news.oneindia.in/2007/12/10/assam-floats-new-council-in-interest-of-six-tribes-1197286587.html>
- 29 No TAD/BC/491/2007/8 dated 4<sup>th</sup> February
- 30 Report of the Cabinet Committee on Creation of Development Councils for Adivasi (Tea Tribes & Ex Tea Tribes), Tai Ahom, Moran, Motak, Koch Rajbongshi and Chutia Communities. Dept of WPT&BC, Govt. of Assam (NO. TAD/BC/531/2010/136)
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Asamiya Pratidin, August 11, 2010
- 33 Asamiya Pratidin, August 11, 2011
- 34 The Assam Tribune, August 23, 2013

- 35 The Sentinel, September 27, 2013  
36 Amar Asom, June 30, 2014  
37 Asamiya Pratidin, July 1, 2014  
38 Asamiya Pratidin, July 2, 2014  
39 Asamiya Pratidin, July 12, 2014

## References:

1. Goswami, S. & V. Tripathi (2015); Understanding the Political Shift in Assam: Withering Congress Dominance, *Economic & Political Weekly*, 1 (39), pp. 67-71.
2. Acharyya, N.N. (1992); *The History of Medieval Assam: From Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Century*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi.
3. Baruah, S. L. (1993); A Brief History of the Chutias Containing of the Trends of their Population Growth. *Smritigrantha* (pp.31-41). ACCCA, Guahati.
4. Baruah, K. (2012); *Aitihāsik Bibortanāt Asomar Chutia Janagusthi*. Kiran Prakash, Gohpur..
5. Baruah, S.L. and Nath, D. (Eds), (2007); *Chutia Jatir Buranji (The History of Chutia Caste)*, The Chutia Caste History Compilation Committee, Guahati.
6. Khanikar, R. (2016); The Politics of ST Status and Assam Poll. *The Assam Tribune*, Guahati.
7. Sarmah, D. (2007); Chutia Hokalor Atmo Porishayar Chetana (The Chutias' Awareness for Self-Identity). In S.L. Baruah, & D. Nath (Eds.), *Chutia Jatir Buranji (The History of Chutia Caste)* (pp. 500-521), The Chutia Caste History Compilation Committee, Guahati.



## TRADITIONAL BELIEFS OF ADI TRIBE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH REFLECTED THROUGH MAMANG DAI'S RECREATION OF FOLKTALES

Bulen Chutia\*

### ABSTRACT

Arunachal Pradesh is a state from Northeastern part of India which is rich in culture, heritage, flora and fauna. It is famous for its serenity, traditions, ethnicity, greenery and scenic beauty. Mamang Dai is a veteran writer and activist from this region. She responsibly collects the folktales which particularly reflect the spirit of her place. Story-telling has always been associated with the origin of human creation along with the universe. Every ethnic race and community has its own set of folktales and stories regarding the origin of the world. These tales help a tribe or community in protecting their cultural identity. Sometimes these stories or folktales dignify the status of the tribe. She collects the local folktales and included in her two children's' books, namely *The Sky Queen* and *Once Upon A Moontime*, from the reservoir of stories, Arunachal Pradesh. Folktales reflect many traditions and help to familiarize people with world cultures without much effort. Mythical and legendary folktales are representatives of culture and heritage that are to be preserved and protected. These folktales from this region depict close relationship between Nature and human beings, which is rare in present era. Nature as living soul is the prime focus in the folktales of Arunachal Pradesh. Mamang Dai thus tries to re-create and re-invent a world of folktales, which carry the lost glory of her place and people. The present paper focuses on the abovementioned issues taking some tales as examples.

**Key Words:** Northeast Indian Writing, Folktales, Identity, Heritage, Culture.

---

\* Research Scholar, Deptt. of English, Nagaland University, Kohima

## **Introduction:**

The concept of heritage is very broad. There is no fixity of structure in which the idea of heritage can be properly shaped. Everything becomes heritage which people are willing to save and protect for future. Be it culture, nature, tradition, material wealth, sculpture, monuments and so in, all become heritage when they contain and carry significance, values and identities. Some of them are tangible and some are intangible in nature. Heritage, in brief, is the preservation of the past. In the words of Laurajane Smith, *Heritage is a multilayered performance-be this a performance of visiting, managing, interpretation or conservation- that embodies acts of remembrance and commemoration while negotiating and constructing a sense of place, belonging and understanding in the present... Heritage is about negotiation- about using the past, and collective or individual memories, to negotiate new ways of being and expressing identity.* (Smith, 3-4)

A whole set of cultural and traditional practices collectively contribute to the preservation of heritage. Human interests and love for their identity offer a great help in heritage preservation. But unfortunately there are many instances where past monuments did not get human attention and thus found to decay. At the present scenario there is urgent need to preserve lost heritage with proper planning and maintenance. This paper shows how Mamang dai tries to preserve the heritage and culture of their land through rewriting of the folktales.

## **Methodology:**

The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. Primary data includes chosen works of the author. The secondary data includes critical references, journals and internet sources. All the collected sources will be used to analyse the proposed objective of the study. Different cultural theories are applied for this study such as myth and fiction and their relationships, cultural hybridization etc. For citation, MLA eighth edition has been used.

## **Discussion:**

The heritage of folktales reflects a hidden glory of the lost past. Folktales are themselves a true representative of a golden past which is no more to be found or experienced. In a society which is rich in oral tradition

is also rich in cultural and traditional heritage. The folktales carry the spirit of the place in such a manner that they become intangible property for the whole race. Each and every tribe or community of the world is more or less surrounded by folktales, regarding the origin of the world, human existence, the creation of Nature and so on.

Mamang Dai recollects the oral tales present in the Adi society to give them a shape in her two childrens' books namely, *The Sky Queen* and *Once Upon A Moontime*, from the 'magical story world of Arunachal Pradesh'. Arunachal Pradesh literally means 'the land of the dawn-lit mountains'. It is also popularly known as 'land of the rising sun'. It is the land of numerous hill tribes and sub-tribes. Arunachal is one of the linguistically richest and diverse regions in Asia, with more than thirty languages, dialects and sub-dialects. Till date, the origin of the land and its people remains in mystery, due to the lack of a written history. Among the three cultural groups, the Adis are the major group of tribes inhabiting in West Siang District of the Province. It has got different sub-tribe groups like Gallong, Janbe, Karka, Memba, Ashing, Bori, Bogum, Bagi, Pailibo, Minyong etc. Myths and stories largely dominate the lives of people there. Social beliefs and cultural practices are mostly based on stories from the hidden past, where the level of reliability is totally uncertain. The plethora of literary products of the entire north-east lingers upon its mysticism, ethnicity, cultural identity, heathenism and primitivism. Mamang Dai focus mostly upon what we can refer to as mythical and legendary, reflecting back to the origin of 'creation'. She tries to discover hidden, untouched facts of her land, giving a special perfectibility to what is mythical, traditional and legendary. She talks about intricacies, labyrinthine presence, enlivening Nature and building a strong bondage between human and Nature. Re-living and re-visiting her past with an amalgamation of the new carry readers with amusement and awe.

*The Sky Queen* is the story about Nyanyi Myete, who is described in the text as "the beautiful lady who floated in one day from the deep endless skies" (Dai, 30). She was the celestial aunt of the Kojum-Koja, whose kingdom was destroyed in the great flood. Kojum-Koja, a civilization was happily living and celebrated many festivals. Before each festival, they went for hunting and fishing. 'Pi-me' was one such festival when all went for fishing and caught a huge fish-like creature. The elders recognized

it as Biri Angur Potung, the son of Biri Bote, the strong and mighty monarch of Sili-Sidong, the Water Kingdom. But the young Kojum-Koja ignored the restriction of elders and ate it up and all fell sick. Koru Ponsung, the Bat witnessed everything that happened in the festival and reported it to the Queen of Biri Bote and miserable death of their son. Biri Bote became angry and declared war against Kojum-Koja. The war continued for many days where the Kingdom of Water defeated Kojum-Koja with storm, rain, water and flood. Thus the whole civilization of Kojum-Koja disappeared under water. After the destruction, only Nyanyi Myete remained alive to spread the lost glory of Kojum-Koja, their songs and dances. She was very kind hearted to everyone starting from birds, animals, insects to human beings. She made people “sing and dance and have a good time”. The Adis therefore remember her as a beautiful lady who floated from the sky and celebrate Nyanyi Myete every year.

On the other hand, *Once Upon A Moontime* contains four beautiful stories which are “How the World was Made”, “The Story of the River”, “Why the Dove Weeps” and “The Sun and the Moon” respectively. “How the World was Made” is the story of the creation of the earth. Lopong Rimbuche and Chom Dande were two brothers who lived in the sky and there was water everywhere. They created human beings on earth and threw a lotus flower to cover the water. They called winds from four directions; the east wind blew yellow dust, the south wind red dust, the north wind black dust and the west wind mixed all the dusts to form the earth. Then the two brothers shaped the earth into hills and valleys giving different colours to them. “The Story of the River” is a wonderful story of the creation of the river Lohit (in Arunachal) or the Brahmaputra (in Assam). Techimdum, the god who lived below the “bluest of blue waters” thought of creating earth as there was only water everywhere. Each and everyone starting from ants, Sun, wind, to Drakob and Daiyunga offered help in this work. The ants carried mouthful of earth from under the water to the surface. The sun helped in drying them and the wind blew the earth all over the surface. The ants also helped in putting four pillars in each corner of the earth for support. They carried seeds of flowers and trees. Drakob and Daiyunga also made a high mountain named the Land of the Sun or Ring Lembun. The Lohit River flowed down this mountain happily but stopped by many little hills. So Crab helped by cutting a channel through the hills. In another part, Lohit became a great lake where a worm helped

to dig a little channel to flow the water. A Wild Cat made the channel a bigger one after drinking its water. The River followed wherever Wild Cat went wandering everywhere till it reached the plains of Assam. It is believed till date that Lohit carries peace and plenty to human beings, animals, birds, insects, trees, flowers and seeds. In “Why the Dove Weeps”, Dove was the caretaker of the son of Donyi the Sun. One day Dove strapped the baby with an eppon when Sun set out to work. When the baby started crying, Dove sang lullaby to make him happy but in vain. So she carried him to his mother and handed him. But unfortunately the eppon fell down and Dove flew to bring it back. When she tried to carry the strap her wings became heavy and thus could not fly back to Donyi’s abode. So she remained on earth forever and starts crying everyday when the sun rises in the east, sets in the west and during midday, remembering her past life. The eppon became a creeper called ‘rippum’ which the Adis use to carry a baby after birth. The last story tells about the creation of sun and moon. Initially there were two suns only whose parents were Epanja and Lanbbai. The younger sun, being bad started giving heat upon the earth to destroy everything and made all suffer a lot. Anya, the great god of the Mishmis sent a messenger to the elder sun to let him know the wrong activities of the younger sun along with some gifts. The elder sun, in return gifted the messenger a silkworm to weave clothes by humans, a white jewel for necklace and his presence in stone to give fire. Being angry, he threw his younger brother into a pool of mud where the younger sun became pale and the marks of mud is still visible. From then, the younger sun never appears in the sky when the elder sun is present and comes only when he leaves the sky.

Mamang Dai, by collecting these oral traditional tales of the Adis, gives them a fairy tale appearance. While doing it, she takes the responsibility to present them in original with a touch of tradition and belief. Her collections are given beautiful illustrations to support the tales. In *Folktales Retold* Amie A. Doughty says, *All traditional folktales have undergone (and continue to undergo) some kind of reshaping, even though most modern readers think of them in terms of a specific version read during childhood* (Doughty, 9)

To keep the original impression in the minds of the reader is truly a challenging task. It becomes most urgent when these oral tales carry an

identity of the race and people. The lost heritage can be preserved through these tales in proper manner. However folktales have a timeless appeal for its readers and audiences. There is no geographical boundary and limitations for folktales. They get translated, distributed, spread through different mediums to every nook and corner of the world. The way 'Cinderella' gets popular in India, 'Tejimola' of Assamese folktales may also get same popularity through translation and adaptation, as both contain similar story elements. It is the duty of every responsible person to safeguard his/her cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible.

Folktales in the form of fairy tales become an indispensable part of children's literature. The idea of the orient is very much present in any children literature. The folktales of the Adis also contain oriental element in them. Mamang Dai tries to keep the stories near to original by using the names in her dialect. The tales reflect the traditional Adi beliefs regarding the creation of the earth and nature. The tales are mixture of both fantasy and tradition. The celebration of Nyanyi Myete, the creation of the earth, the name of Adi gods, the birth story of a river- each tale contains a true Adi spirit which is unique and celestial. When transforming a folktale into a fairy tale, the story teller keeps in mind to attract a child reader first. So, each and every element is presented in a suitable and easy manner for better understanding.

The preservation of folktales of a particular region helps in discovering and establishing the national identity of its people. The presence of mythical elements gives folktales another perspective to the race and nation. The Adis were once the followers of Animism who believed the presence of God amidst Nature. So their folktales are about Nature and natural objects in abundance. The folktales reflect that there is a close association of Nature with the Adis.

Since folktales are oral collections, they get shaped and re-shaped throughout the ages in different versions. So their actual originality and singularity can never be recovered. What we find today is the fractured and manipulated version of these tales. So printed versions of these tales actually contribute to the permanent preservation, which can be easily available and accessible. In absence of a script language, Mamang Dai thus takes help of a foreign language in order to preserve her own culture. By doing this, she actively contributes to enrich the literary heritage of her

place and people.

Hailing from a postcolonial and postmodern world, Mamang Dai's representation of the folk tales becomes hybrid and ambivalent. Her presentation of the folktales in the form of fairy-tales has a universal appeal which can be read and understood in different parts of the world. Re-telling gives her a space to re-analyse and re-document the oral traditional folktales in a new and attractive dimension and perspective. Vanessa Joosen in her work *Critical and Creative Perspectives on Fairy Tales: An Intertextual Dialogue Between Fairy-Tale Scholarship and Postmodern Retellings* talks about an intertextual appeal of folktales and fairy tales. She says, *The Intertextual relationship between fairy-tale retellings and traditional fairy tales has a double effect. By critically distancing themselves from the fairy tale, retellings invite readers to reconsider the traditional texts...Although a large number of fairy-tale retellings problematize the traditional fairy tales, they are an important factor in its canonization process* ( Joosen, 16-17)

It is sometimes necessary to become hybridized for the sake of a greater universal appeal. There is also a risk of losing the track of originality and purity inherent in the folktales. But oral tradition, on the other hand, always gets deconstructed when the stories tread down from generation to generation. Each story-teller uses his/her own interpretation and manipulation while re-telling the stories. So finally there remains the narrator's version which s/he transforms into written manuscripts and printed version gets a bolder outlook. Likewise, the lost heritage of folk and fairy tales gets a material re-production which can be easily accessible and preserved for future use.

Folktales and fairytales have great impact upon human lives. We grow listening to the fairytales told mostly by our grandmothers. So there is a special link between woman and fairytales. Theorists try to provide a connection between these two and find most fairy tale narrators found to be female ones. Fairy tales leave the children in an imaginative world where they get chance to be creative and adventurous.

### **Conclusions:**

From the above discussion it may be concluded that–

1. Mamang Dai with her two representational folktale collections,

not only glorifies the lost oral tradition of her community but also contribute to the greater preservation and heritage conservation of the identity of the Adis.

2. Due to the absence of a script language, many tribes of Northeast India have already faced the loss of identity and many languages are at the fringe of death. So it is high time to re-collect and preserve the golden oral tradition available in different dialects of Northeast India.
3. Mamang Dai, thus, takes a praiseworthy step to enliven the rich cultural and oral traditions of the Adis, one of the representative tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.
4. Writing in English may also help a lot in popularizing and globalizing one's culture and heritage.

#### **Notes & References:**

1. Bacchilega, Cristina. *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1955.
2. Dai, Mamang. *The Sky Queen*. Katha, 2005.
3. Doughty, Amie A. *Folktales Retold: A Critical Overview of Stories Updated for Children*. McFarland & Co Inc, 2006.
4. Howard, Peter. *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity*. Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003.
5. Joosen, Vanessa. *Critical and Creative Perspectives on Fairy Tales: An Intertextual Dialogue Between Fairy-Tale Scholarship and Postmodern Retellings*. Wayne State University Press, 1977.
6. Smith, Laurajane. *Uses of Heritage*. Routledge, 2006.
7. Thompson, Stith. *The Folktale*. University of California Press, 1977.



## **STATUS OF WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PRACTICES AMONG THE MISSING COMMUNITY OF ASSAM: A CASE STUDY OF LEZAI KOLAKHOWA AREA OF DIBRUGARH DISTRICT IN ASSAM**

**Punya Gogoi\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Water is a basic necessity and an important resource for sanitizing life. The decline in water quality endangers the health of human as well as the ecosystem. People affected by disasters are generally much more susceptible to illness and death from diseases, which are related to large extent to inadequate sanitization, inadequate water supplies and poor hygiene. Therefore, adequate or clean drinking water, sanitization and hygiene play an important role in maintain health. Missing community of Assam is one of the indigenous ethnic tribe. Without the improvement their sanitation and hygiene practices, the overall health status of the society will be vulnerable. Thus the main intend of the present study is to know water supply, sanitation and hygiene practices among the Missing tribes of Dibrugarh district of Assam.

**Key Words:** Sanitation, Health, Hygiene, Missing.

### **Introduction:**

Assam, a state of India is located in the NER of the country. Missing are one of indigenous ethnic tribe of Assam. They have been here since the Chutia rule in Sadiya forming an integral part of Assamese society and culture. But they are not conscious for their health and hygiene because of poor socio economic condition, ignorance due to illiteracy, overcrowded and unhygienic living conditions. So, in this study we observed their water supply, sanitary practices in detail. They felt urgent need for intervention of Govt to reduce the disease and improve the sanitary practices and water supply.

---

\* Assistant Professor of Economics, Nandalal Borgohain College, Dibrugarh

## **Objective:**

The basic objectives of the study are—

1. To know the water supply in the study area.
2. To study the sanitation practices and its adequacy among the people.
3. To understand the hygiene practices adopted by this area.

## **Conceptual Framework:**

The Government has taken many steps for rural development. Water supply and sanitation are some of important measures taken by the Government. This resource is attempts to learn to what extend this activity have been fruitful in the study area.

## **Hypothesis:**

The central hypothesis is that the sanitation, water supply programme of government has not become fully successful in the rural areas in Assam because the level of awareness in the programme is low.

## **Review of Related Literature:**

**International Relevance:** Various efforts have been made international level in this area. Julie Fisher Loughborough University, in her resource paper explain a synthesis of the evidence gathered for the water supply and sanitation collaborative council (WSSCC) shows the connection between women's wellbeing and water supply, sanitation facilities and hygiene practices. Kelly K Baker, University of Iowa, also study about a population based assessment of water, sanitation and hygiene risk.

**National Relevance:** Nov. 2008, the government of India launched a national urban sanitation policy with the goal of creating what it calls totally sanitize cities. Panchayati Raj Institutions, play role in provision of rural water supply and sanitation as of 2006. Medhi G.K., Hazarika N.C., Sha B, Mahanto J also research about the nutrition and hygiene of tea garden people.

## **Methodology:**

The methodology of this project is based on both primary and

secondary sources of data collected from the village people of the study area.

### **Sample of The Study:**

For the purpose of the study, the Lezai Pani Miri Gaon, Dibrugarh has been selected to represent all other Mishing Villages. This village consists of 1320 population and 160 households. The present study has taken 50% of the total households comprising 80% out the total of 160 households.

### **Relevance and Anticipated Outcomes:**

The problem related to water supply, sanitation and hygiene practice in the study area facts found that the source of water is not adequate in the areas. Many households have to depend on other households for drinking water. Many people still use open source as toilets. Govt. and Gaon Panchayat provide toilets are not adequate. Most important observation in this regard is that, Govt. provisions of water supply are totally absent in the surveyed area.

### **Finding:**

There is a complete lack of hygiene and sanitations in some of the rural areas of Assam. As the literacy rate is very low, the people are ignorant about the importance of cleanness. The Government is also not taking steps to address the issues.

P.M.Sri Narendra Modis Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has failed to take off in Assam as is evident from the status report card, the anchalik panchayat (BLOCK) water and sanitation committee which should be ideally entrusted with the responsibility to look after the work and progress of sanitation at the Block level has not been formed in any of the district of Assam.

In sample survey questions was asked to the selected households regarding the source provisions and adequacy of water supply, under the survey it was found that hand pump/tube well is most common source of water supply of the households. Regarding provisions of water supply it is found that mostly the water supply sources are self made. Most important observation in this regards is that Government provisions of water supply in this area are totally absent.

Regarding the conditions of toilets, it is unfortunate that some of the

people use open space as toilets which is very unhealthy and prone various sanitation related diseases. The toilets related hygiene practices are poor. Out of the person who are using hygiene practice majority of them use soap for this purposes. In the survey it was found that the households are aware about the benefit of washing hands before and after taking meal and almost all the households are having the practice.

Due to lack of proper knowledge they are unaware of the proper sanitation and hygiene practices. Lack of education makes them more vulnerable to the sanitation related and some other diseases.

### **Conclusion:**

The Missing Community is the most important the part and parcel of our society. Without the improvement of their sanitation and hygiene practices, the overall health status of the whole society will be vulnerable.

### **Notes & References:**

1. Deodhar, N.S. (1983); *The Concept of Health and Disease*; introduced by Dr. R. V. Sathe, National Book Trust, India A-5, New Delhi 12
2. Hazarika, M. P. (2015); *Sanitation and its Impact of Health: A Study in Jorhat, Assam*, International Journal of Scientific And Research Publication Volume 5; Issue 10
3. Schumacher, a. J. (2005); *Water for All; Moving towards Access to Fresh Drinking Water and Sanitation*. UN Chronicle; 42(2)
4. [www.assaminfo.com](http://www.assaminfo.com) (internat source 2014)



## **CLIMATE CHANGE:THE PHENOMENON, EVIDENCES AND PROBLEMS OF DISCOURSES**

**Pankaj Roy\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Global climate change is considered one of the major threats to the World Community of this earth as it has no boundary or limitations to any country. Though the recent studies prove that climate change is obvious yet, there are two groups of scientists; one accepts the phenomena of global climate change but, the other group disagrees with the previous school of thought. The climate change issue is one of the most discoursed issues in the present research context. But, the experimentation, execution and explanation of such phenomenon from one aspect are nearly impossible as it has vast dimensions. Though the evidences are available, data are limited yet, researchers are curious about the climate change issue. This paper exercises some real evidences of climate change phenomena and their logistic reasoning and scientific explanations. An attempt has also been made to analyse the problems of discourses of this phenomena faced by the global scientific society.

**Key Words:** Climate Change, Controversies, Discourses, Glacier Retreat, Emissions.

### **Introduction:**

How was the climate in the past? How is the climate in the present or in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? And how it will be in 100 years or 1000 years from now? Scientists are very excited to know the answers of these questions. Many researches and projects have already been done and other more research experiments are going on to find out the solutions of these issues. Climate change is a phenomenon which has been happening since the

---

\* *Research Scholar Dept of Geography, NEHU, Shillong.*

time immemorial. But now, climate change is a great concern all over the world. It's one of the biggest challenges to the global community living on the earth. If climate change is a phenomenon which has been happening since the time immemorial then, why it's a matter of worry! The real thing is that the rate of climate change has increased manifold in recent few decades especially after the industrial revolution. It's a never ending endeavour by humans as the population pressure, urbanisation, deforestation, industrialisation, luxurious standard of living are rampant in their only and one homeland i.e. the earth as they are accelerating the pace of global climate change. Despite of these it's a matter of fact that population has to increase, it may be in the slowest rate ever in the demographic history of the world but, of course population will rise, they will be urbanised and luxurious. Now question is that, are the humans capable of controlling the emission of harmful gases such as CFCs, Carbon di Oxide, Carbon Mono Oxide, Sulphur di Oxide, etc. which lead to climate change? Are the humans able to increase the vegetation cover of the globe? Are the humans capable of sustainable industrialisation and urbanisation? These are the real challenges in near future before us as the sensible people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century on this earth.

### **Definitions of Climate Change:**

Before making any controversy to the climate change issue, the understanding of the whole phenomenon is very important. Different scientists define this global phenomenon from different angles and arrived in conclusion differently. Below are two definitions of climate change:

1. Climate change in IPCC usage refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity. This usage differs from that in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where climate change refers to a change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of

the global atmosphere and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods(Bernstein, et al., 2007, p. 30).

2. Climate Change can be defined as a measurable shift in climate such as marked changes in mean temperature or rainfall or altered patterns of extreme weather involving storms, floods or droughts. Such shifts are usually measured against known climate benchmarks averaged over long periods of time, typically 30 years, e.g. 1931-60; 1961-90. Climate change persists for years or longer and can occur at any spatial scale. When widespread, affecting large regions such as whole countries and continents, it becomes a major event(O'hare, et al. 2005, pp. 255-266)

From these two viewpoints climate change can be categorised into two types—Natural Climate Change and Anthropogenic Climate Change. Of course, depending on the time scale the classification of climate change is Long term Climate Change and Short term Climate change. The geologic record indicates that dramatic changes in climate have occurred in the past. These changes occurred in the absence of humans, for the most part, and we can call them natural climate changes. Understanding these natural climate changes is a challenging and important problem that will help us to understand and predict future natural and human-induced climate changes(Hartmann, 1994, p. 286).

### **Controversies of Climate Change:**

The scientists have different opinions of Climate change among them. It is a matter of concern that climate change is accelerated by the anthropogenic activities according to a group of scientists; but in the same time for another group of scientists, they are in the opinion that climate change is obvious and quite natural as it happened long before in the geological history rather than the anthropogenic aspect and this is why the second group of scientists is not too much worry about it unlike the first group.

Though the climate change controversy is overwhelmed, “the greenhouse effect is not controversial. In fact, according to Stephen H. Schneider of the National Centre for Atmospheric Research in Boulder,

Colorado, the phenomenon is ‘one of the best established theories in atmospheric science.’ At least a century ago, Schneider says, scientists knew that while carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other “greenhouse gases” freely allow solar radiation to enter the planet’s atmosphere, these gases permit only a portion of the infrared radiation produced to escape back to space. The greenhouse effect explains, for example, why Venus, which has a dense CO<sub>2</sub> atmosphere, is very hot; why Mars, with only a thin CO<sub>2</sub> layer, is ice-cold; and why temperatures on Earth have been ideally suited for plant and animal life. Scientists also have long known that human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, are artificially increasing the volume of greenhouse gases in the earth’s atmosphere and that this increase eventually will make the planet the hottest it has been in human history. What remains controversial about the greenhouse effect, says Schneider, is the rate of this global warming, its regional distribution, and, most of all, what to do about the problem. Schneider spoke at a recent conference, the First North American Conference on Preparing for Climate Change: A Cooperative Approach. The meeting addressed two problems—the greenhouse effect and stratospheric ozone depletion. John C. Topping, Jr., president of the Washington, DC-based Climate Institute, which organized the conference, said that the meeting was the largest gathering ever on the subject of adapting to climate change. More importantly, he said, it was the first time that climatologists and ‘climate impact scholars’ (those who study the effects of climate change) had met with a broad array of policy makers, including representatives of state and federal government; electric utilities; chemical, oil and gas industries; forestry and agriculture; automobile makers; and leading environmental organizations. Most participants left the meeting feeling optimistic, Topping said, because the programme focused on specific actions to address a problem far too often viewed fatalistically. He said, ‘People came away seeing that they could divide the issue into chewable pieces and start working on those pieces right now.’

Gigantic environmental experiment as far back as the turn of the century, a few scientists had already begun to worry that massive amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> being released as a result of the Industrial Revolution would change the world’s climate. In the 1950s, these concerns were supported by measurements demonstrating that atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> was in fact increasing (Fig. 1). In recent years, both data and worries have proliferated, coming

to a head in 1985 when a distinguished international group of scientists issued dire warnings following a conference sponsored by the International Council of Scientific Unions, the World Meteorological Organization, and the United Nations Environment Programme. At a hearing the following year before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, Wallace S. Broecker of Columbia University in New York City echoed the concerns of many scientists. ‘The inhabitants of planet earth are quietly conducting a gigantic environmental experiment,’ Broecker said. ‘So vast and so sweeping will be the impacts of this experiment that, were it brought before any responsible council for approval, it would be firmly rejected as having potentially dangerous consequences.’

Levels of CO<sub>2</sub> have already increased approximately 25% since 1900. Today most atmospheric scientists agree that, even if fossil fuel emissions are reduced somewhat, CO<sub>2</sub> levels will double by the second half of the 21st century. This doubling will powerfully affect not only global temperatures, but also other physical phenomena, including rain-fall, winds, ocean currents, sea level, and storm patterns. Because the effects of doubled CO<sub>2</sub> cannot be studied directly, researchers have relied on global climate models—mathematical representations of the atmosphere that simulate, on computers, climate change under various scenarios. These models generally predict that a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> levels will cause global mean temperatures to rise between 2° and 5 ° C. One of the most widely used climate models was developed at the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) in New York City. According to James E. Hansen, one of the creators of the GISS model, support for the predicted 2°-5° C warming comes from empirical as well as theoretical evidence. For example, he said, recently developed palaeoclimate records which show fluctuations in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> over the past 100,000 years and correlate these fluctuations with various climate parameters have provided “remarkable confirmation” of the models’ predictions.

Still, many uncertainties remain. Oceans, for example, have a tremendous capacity to store heat. Their ability to delay global warming, while considered in the models, remains somewhat uncertain. Clouds are another important yet unpredictable variable. Changes in global temperature and precipitation patterns will certainly alter the number, distribution and kinds of clouds, yet the precise changes and how they will affect climate

are unknown. There also are many uncertainties concerning human behaviour, said Schneider. These include population growth, per capita fossil fuel consumption, deforestation and reforestation rates, and the possibility of new technology to mitigate CO<sub>2</sub> build-up. Despite these uncertainties, Schneider says, “there is no disagreement that large climatic changes are highly probable and at rates that are fast relative to rates that have caused significant ecological changes in the past.” These changes will dramatically affect both human and natural systems, threatening such crucial activities as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, pollution control, and the protection of parks and preserves. At the conference, scientific panels considered the effects of climate change on these and more than a dozen other activities. It was clear that researchers are just beginning to understand the effects of greenhouse climate changes; it will be many years at least before they are able to tell society how to prepare for those changes”(Tangle, 1988, pp. 14-18).

The Earth’s climate has changed throughout history. Just in the last 650,000 years there have been seven cycles of glacial advance and retreat, with the abrupt end of the last ice age about 7,000 years ago marking the beginning of the modern climate era — and of human civilization. Most of these climate changes are attributed to very small variations in Earth’s orbit that change the amount of solar energy our planet receives. The current warming trend is of particular significance because most of it is very likely human-induced and proceeding at a rate that is unprecedented in the past 1,300 years. Earth-orbiting satellites and other technological advances have enabled scientists to see the big picture, collecting many different types of information about our planet and its climate on a global scale. Studying these climate data collected over many years reveal the signals of a changing climate(<http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>).

### **Certain Facts about Earth’s Climate are Undisputed:**

1. The heat-trapping nature of carbon dioxide and other gases was demonstrated in the mid-19th century. Their ability to affect the transfer of infrared energy through the atmosphere is the scientific basis of many instruments flown by NASA. Increased levels of greenhouse gases must cause the Earth to warm in response(<http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>).

2. Ice cores drawn from Greenland, Antarctica, and Tropical Mountain glaciers show that the Earth's climate responds to changes in solar output, in the Earth's orbit and in greenhouse gas levels. They also show that in the past, large changes in climate have happened very quickly, geologically-speaking: in tens of years, not in millions or even thousands (National Research Council, 2006).

### **Evidences of Climate Change:**

A growing number of studies suggest, however, that global climate changes may not just be a conservation problem for the future but may in fact be a current threat to species and ecosystems. I review the rapidly accumulating, direct documentation of changes in species and ecosystems linked to global climate change (Hughes 2000).

The Earth's climate has warmed 0.3° to 0.6° C over the last 100 years (IPCC, 1996). The rate of change has varied, with warming occurring most rapidly during the periods 1925-1944 and 1978-1997 (Jones et al. 1999). Although an average increase of 0.5 ° C is significant for many physiological and ecological systems, this single value understates the magnitude of the changes to which species have been exposed. Temperature changes vary geographically and tend to be greatest during the coldest months (Easterling et al. 1997). Between 1950 and 1993, for example, winter minimum temperatures rose almost 3° C and spring maximum temperatures increased 1.4 ° C in the northern hemisphere (Easterling et al. 1997). Changes in precipitation have also occurred (IPCC, 1996).

The observation that climate is already changing has promoted re-evaluation of long-term data sets. A number of high-profile papers have resulted, establishing a plausible link between recent changes in climate and observed changes in species and communities (e.g. Parmesan 1996; Brown et al. 1999; Parmesan et al. 1999; Pounds et al. 1999; C. D. Thomas & Lennon 1999). Given the unavoidable constraint on establishing a definitive causal link between large-scale climate patterns and species and communities, the overall picture provided by the combination of these studies is needed to best evaluate the insights this emerging body of work can provide to conservation biology (McCarty, 2001, pp. 320-331).

We can find evidence of the Earth's past climates from the distant geological past to the most recent millennium. For example, coal deposits tell us of a tropical climate that existed in the Carboniferous period, while we can find signs that ice once existed in certain areas in the way it has shaped the landscape and the deposits it has left behind. Direct instrumental records really began about 200 years ago with the advent of modern instrument like thermometers, rain gauges and anemometers. While they provide a fairly accurate record, they have been around for too short a period to sample the whole range of climate changes that have taken place in the past, and that could occur again in the future (Huddart & Stott, 2010, p. 118).

### **Some Geographic Evidences of Climate Change:**

#### **1. Muir Glacier Melt, Alaska:**

The Muir Glacier has undergone very rapid, well-documented retreat since its Little Ice Age maximum position at the mouth of Glacier Bay around 1780 (Hall, 1995). Between 1941 and 2004 the glacier retreated more than twelve kilometres and thinned by over 800 meters. The evidences of Muir Glacier (Fig. 2) clearly depicts that ocean water has filled the valley replacing the ice.

#### **2 O'Higgins Glacier Melt, Chile:**

Almost all the glaciers in the southern Patagonian ice field, in the south of Chile and Argentina, are melting. O'Higgins Glacier, which makes up a quarter of the ice field, is one of those that have changed the most. Its leading edge remained stable until the start of the twentieth century, when it began a retreat that measured 15 kilometres (about 9 miles) by 1995. Some 12 kilometres (over 7 miles) of ice were lost between 1945 and 1980 alone. While some of the reduction in the glacier's thickness and area is due to the dynamics of the ice itself, global warming speeds up the rate of melting. In the 2007 satellite image, the glacier's retreat is quite visible relative to the 1973 image (Fig. 3), when it extended several kilometres into O'Higgins Lake (purple-blue area).

#### **3. Ice Melt, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo:**

It may seem strange to think of glaciers on the equator, but they do exist on the Rwenzori Mountains between Uganda and Democratic

Republic of the Congo. But the glaciers atop Speke, Stanley and Baker peaks have been diminishing, as is evident from the images (Fig. 4). They shrank by half between 1987 and 2003. Though seasonal changes account for some of the difference seen here, increased air temperature and decreased snow accumulation are generally blamed for most of the loss. Also, decreased cloud cover may have contributed to a higher rate of sublimation, in which ice vaporizes without first melting. A century ago, the glaciers covered nearly 6.5 square kilometres (2.5 square miles). At their current rate of recession, they will be gone within the next two decades according to researchers estimate.

#### **4. Shrinking Ice Sheets of Greenland and Antarctic:**

The Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have decreased in mass (Fig. 5). Data from NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment show Greenland lost 150 to 250 cubic kilometres (36 to 60 cubic miles) of ice per year between 2002 and 2006, while Antarctica lost about 152 cubic kilometres (36 cubic miles) of ice between 2002 and 2005(<http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>).

#### **5. Bear Glacier melt, Alaska:**

The Bear Glacier of Alaska is a clear indication of increasing temperature in the higher altitude which marks the global climatic change. The series of images from Fig.6 shows the shrinkage of Bear Glacier from 1980 to 2011. Warming in the region has caused less build-up of snow and therefore less material for glacial growth. As the glacier has receded, ice at the end of the glacier has broken off the main body, forming icebergs in the open water. The left image was taken in 5<sup>th</sup> June, 1980 by the Multispectral Scanner on-board Landsat 3. The centre image was taken in 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1989 by the Thematic Mapper sensor on-board Landsat 4 and the right image was taken in 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2011 by the Enhanced Thematic Mapper Plus sensor on-board Landsat 7. The 2011 image shows considerable retreat of the glacier's "tongue." The massive shrinkage can be observed from the image of 1980 and 2011 of the same glacier.

#### **6. Global Temperature Rise:**

The global temperature rise has been proved by different studies. Among all some of the major findings have been put on the website of

NASA are worth mentioning. The global surface temperature reconstructions show that Earth has warmed since 1880. Most of this warming has occurred since the 1970s, with the 20 warmest years having occurred since 1981 and with all 10 of the warmest years occurring in the past 12 years. Even though the 2000s witnessed a solar output decline resulting in an unusually deep solar minimum in 2007-2009, surface temperatures continue to increase.

### **7. Warming Oceans:**

The water bodies of the earth surface absorb the atmospheric heat energy and trap it. The surface temperature of the oceans has been increasing. The oceans have absorbed much of this increased heat, with the top 700 meters (about 2,300 feet) of ocean showing warming of 0.302 degrees Fahrenheit since 1969. This phenomenon is proved by the research and is available in the website of NASA.

### **Status of Global Forest Cover:**

The global forest cover is 3952 million ha (Table 1), which is about 30 percent of the world's land area (FAO, 2006a). Most relevant for the carbon cycle is between 2000 and 2005, gross deforestation continued at the rate of 12.9 million ha/yr. This is mainly as a result of converting forests to agricultural land, but also due to expansion of settlements, infrastructure and unsustainable logging practices (FAO, 2006a; MEA, 2005b). In the 1990s, gross deforestation was slightly higher, at 13.1 million ha/yr. Due to afforestation, landscape restoration and natural expansion of forests, the most recent estimate of net loss of forest is 7.3 million ha/yr. The loss is still largest in South America, Africa and Southeast Asia. This net loss was less than that of 8.9 million ha/yr in the 1990s. Thus, carbon stocks in forest biomass decreased in Africa, Asia, and South America, but increased in all other regions. According to FAO (2006a), globally net carbon stocks in forest biomass decreased by about 4,000 MtCO<sub>2</sub> annually between 1990 and 2005 (Table 1). The area of forest plantation was about 140 million ha in 2005 and increased by 2.8 million ha/yr between 2000 and 2005, mostly in Asia (quoted FAO, 2006a). According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (quoted 2005b) scenarios, forest area in industrialized regions will increase between 2000 and 2050 by about 60 to 230 million ha. At the

same time, the forest area in the developing regions will decrease by about 200 to 490 million ha. In addition to the decreasing forest area globally, forests are severely affected by disturbances such as forest fires, pests (insects and diseases) and climatic events including drought, wind, snow, ice, and floods. Degradation defined as decrease of density or increase of disturbance in forest classes, affected tropical regions at a rate of 2.4 million ha/yr in the 1990s (Nabuurs, et al., 2007).

### **Emission Trends:**

Total industrial sector GHG emissions are currently estimated to be about 12 GtCO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr (3.3 GtC-eq/yr). Global and sectoral data on final energy use, primary energy use and energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions including indirect emissions related to electricity use, for 1971 to 2004 (Price et al., 2006), are shown in Table 2. In 1971, the industrial sector used 91 EJ of primary energy, 40% of the global total of 227 EJ. By 2004, industry's share of global primary energy use declined to 37%. The developing nations' share of industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from energy use grew from 18% in 1971 to 53% in 2004. In 2004, energy use by the industrial sector resulted in emissions of 9.9 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (2.7 GtC), 37% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from energy use. Direct CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in total is 5.1 Gt (1.4 GtC), the balance being indirect emissions associated with the generation of electricity and other energy carriers. In 2000, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from non-energy uses of fossil fuels (e.g., production of petrochemicals) and from non-fossil fuel sources (e.g., cement manufacture) were estimated to be 1.7 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (0.46 GtC) (Olivier and Peters, 2005). Industrial emissions of non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases totalled about 0.4 GtCO<sub>2</sub>-eq (0.1 GtC-eq) in 2000 and are projected to be at about the same level in 2010. Direct GHG emissions from the industrial sector are currently about 7.2 GtCO<sub>2</sub>-eq (2.0 GtC-eq), and total emissions, including indirect emissions, are about 12 GtCO<sub>2</sub>-eq (3.3 GtC-eq). Table 2 shows the results for the industrial sector of the disaggregation of two of the emission scenarios, A1B and B2, produced for the IPCC Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (SRES) (IPCC, 2000b) into four subsectors and nine world regions (Price et al., 2006). These projections show energy-related industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 14 and 20 GtCO<sub>2</sub> in 2030 for the B2 and A1B scenarios, respectively. In both scenarios, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from

industrial energy use are expected to grow significantly in the developing countries, while remaining essentially constant in the A1 scenario and declining in the B2 scenario for the industrialized countries and countries with economies-in-transition. However, baselines differ substantially for sectors covered by other studies, for example IPCC/TEAP (2005). As a result of mitigation actions, non-CO<sub>2</sub> GHG emissions decreased from 1990 to 2000, and there are many programmes underway to further reduce these emissions.

### **Problems of Climate Change Discourses:**

A mere talking about climate change is so easy but, the realization of real facts comes from scientific studies which need various databases across the globe in temporal resolution and their systematic statistical analysis. But the real challenge ahead of the global scientific community is that the shortage of relevant data especially in the third world countries. Some of the problems of scientific study about climate change are highlighted here taking from the Synthesis Report on Climate Change 2007. These are:

- (i) Climate data coverage remains limited in some regions and there is a notable lack of geographic balance in data and literature on observed changes in natural and managed systems, with marked scarcity in developing countries.
- (ii) Analysing and monitoring changes in extreme events, including drought, tropical cyclones, extreme temperatures and the frequency and intensity of precipitation, is more difficult than for climatic averages as longer data time-series of higher spatial and temporal resolutions are required.
- (iii) Effects of climate changes on human and some natural systems are difficult to detect due to adaptation and non-climatic drivers.
- (iv) Difficulties remain in reliably simulating and attributing observed temperature changes to natural or human causes at smaller than continental scales. At these smaller scales, factors such as landuse change and pollution also complicate the detection of anthropogenic warming influence on physical

and biological systems.

- (vi) The magnitude of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from land-use change and CH<sub>4</sub> emissions from individual sources remain as key uncertainties (Bernstein, et al., 2007, p. 72).

### **Conclusion:**

Despite of the on-going controversies, climate change is a fact of reality which has been proved by evidences available worldwide. The challenges before the global scientific community involved in climate change studies is to find out the solutions so that the global society can tackle the problem with the limited resources at hand and technology available to them despite of problems faced and acute data shortages.

### **Notes & References:**

1. Bernstein, L., Bosch, P., Canziani, O., Chen, Z., Christ, R., Davidson, O., et al. (2007); *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Hall, D. K. (1995); Changes of glacier in Glacier Bay, Alaska, using ground and satellite measurements. *Physical Geography*, 27-41.
3. Hartmann, D. L. (1994); *Global Physical Climatology* (1st ed., Vol. 56). (R. D. Holton, Ed.) Washington, Seattle, USA: Academic Press.
4. <http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>. (n.d.). Retrieved 07 30, 2013, from NASA: <http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>
5. Huddart, D., & Stott, T. (2010); *Earth Environments: Past, Present and Future* (1st ed.). Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
6. IPCC. (1996); *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
7. McCarty, J. P. (2001, April); *Ecological Consequences of Recent*

*Climate Change, Conservation Biology, 15(2), 320-331.*

8. Nabuurs, G. J., Maser, O., Andrasko, K., Benitez-Ponce, P., Boer, R., Dutschke, M., et al. (2007); *Forestry*, In O. D. B. Metz, *Climate Change* (p. 545). Cambridge, New York, NY, United Kingdom, USA : Cambridge University Press.
9. National Research Council, (2006); *Surface Temperature Reconstructions For the Last 2,000 Years*. National Research Council (NRC). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
10. O'hare, G., Johnson, A., & Pope, R. (2005, Autumn); *Current Shifts in Abrupt Climate Change: The Stability of the North Atlantic Conveyor and. Geography, 90(3), 250-266.*
11. Tangle, L. (1988, January); *Preparing for Climate Change, BioScience, 38(1 ), 14-18.*



## SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE

Abdul Aziz Khan\*

### ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization (1948) definition of Health in the preamble to its constitution, states that: *“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity”*. In recent years, this statement has been amplified to include the ability to lead a *“socially and economically productive life”*. Socioeconomic and political factors are important determinants of health. This is dramatically reflected in the comment of Naina, wife of Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister of Russia that, *“We have astronauts flying in space ships, but we do not have enough wheel chairs”*. In USA, in spite of the most sophisticated advances in medicine, even family planning and immunization services are not available free, as in India. During the past few decades, there has been a reawakening that health is a fundamental human right and a worldwide social goal; that it is essential to the satisfaction of basic human needs and to an improved quality of life; and, that it is to be attained by all people. In 1977, the 30th World Health Assembly decided that the main social target of governments and WHO in the coming decades should be *“the attainment by all citizens of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life”*, for brevity, called *“Health for All”*. With the adoption of health as an integral part of socio-economic development by the United Nations in 1979, health, while being an end in itself, has also become a major instrument of overall socio-economic development and the creation of a new social order.

---

\* Assistant Professor of Tahaffuzi wa Samaji Tib (Preventive & Social Medicine), Faculty of Unani Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

## **Introduction:**

*“The secret of National Health lies in the homes of the people”*

**Health** is a state responsibility. As laid down in the Constitution of India, “The state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement”. Also, “The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of the public health as among its primary duties... “ Article 47. It is important to realize that the politician can play a crucial role in health. Within the limited resources, it is he who fixes the priorities. It has been aptly said that “The solution to many of today’s problems will not be found in the research laboratories of our hospitals, but in our parliaments. For the prospective patient, the answer may not come by incision at the operation table, but by prevention through decision at the Cabinet table.”

Health cannot be isolated from its social context. The last few decades have shown that social and economic factors have as much influence on health as medical interventions. All these factors have a direct bearing on the incidence, course and outcome of a wide variety of communicable and non-communicable diseases as well as on many other health problems besetting the world today. They also have an important effect on the provision of health care to all strata of society.

Poverty, malnutrition, poor sanitation, lack of education, inadequate housing, unemployment, poor working conditions, cultural and behavioural factors all predispose to ill-health. Today more than ever before, there has been an increasing recognition that successful application of medicine to individuals and groups involves more than mere scientific or biological knowledge; it involves an understanding of the behaviour of individuals and groups who live together and also share certain values of life. Man is a social animal. The patient is no longer considered as one who is under strict laboratory control, but an individual with personal idiosyncrasies, erratic habits, customs and beliefs reacting on his body and mind. It has been aptly said that even a person with a broken leg may present complex social and personal factors which may influence his recovery.

Thus, there has been a shift from the earlier concept of visualizing disease in terms of a specific germ to the involvement of “multiple factors” in the causation of disease. Good doctors are being identified as those who treat people, and bad ones as those who treat cases. As a result of this new outlook, concepts of sociology are increasingly being used in the study of disease in human societies.

### **Social Context of Medicine:**

Medicine and the social sciences are concerned, in their own special way, with human behaviour. Specialists in community health, clinical medicine, and epidemiology are all seeking the cooperation and help of social scientists in understanding problems such as the social component of health and disease, “illness behaviour” of people, efficient use of medical care and the study of medical institutions. A brief sketch of the current interest of these disciplines in social science is given below:

#### **1. Community Health:**

Community health workers are often faced with the problem of why people who need a particular service are least likely to use it or fail to secure the total benefit which is expected. A case in point is immunization against communicable diseases. Although, there is a wide range of prophylactic vaccines; immunization has not gained universal acceptance. The family planning programme in India is a recent example of a health service of which people are not making use to the extent desired. Similarly, health programmes relating to mother and child health care services, improvement of water supplies, installation of sanitary latrines, improvement of dietary patterns and infant rearing practices have all proved abortive or only partially successful. The resistance of the people is felt not only in the field of community health, but in fact even in fields designed to improve their general standard of living.

#### **2. Clinical Medicine:**

During the past half century, the scientific content of medicine has increased enormously. The acute communicable diseases have been brought under control, and good medical care is available to more people than ever before. This has brought to a sharp focus, the so-called “modern diseases”

such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and mental illness. These diseases have defied “cure” and prevention, and are currently the major causes of morbidity and mortality in developed societies. The clinicians also tend to believe that “psychophysiological stress reactions” are involved in cases of rheumatoid arthritis, obesity, ulceration of intestine, skin diseases, constipation, diarrhoea and epilepsy. It has become apparent that control of these diseases involves not merely medical care but basic changes in the behaviour and habits of the patients, which is a field of specialization of social scientists.

The clinicians have also shown interest in what is known as “illness behaviour” of patients, i.e., why different people react in different ways to the same disease process or regimen of treatment. It is not known why some people (whether by reason of education, religion, social class difference or occupational status) make light of symptoms and some respond in an exaggerated manner, to the slightest pain or discomfort. This is an important area of medical sociology. It is recognized that the physician needs two kinds of knowledge — medical knowledge and social knowledge, so that he could more effectively serve the patient and the community. Hence is the current interest of medical men in social sciences.

### **3. Epidemiology:**

Epidemiologists have also forged a close alliance with social scientists in studying the distribution of health and disease in human population, and of factors that cause the distribution. Disease is studied in relationship to factors such as social status, income, occupation, housing, overcrowding, social customs, habits and behaviour. Examples can be found in researches into the ecology of coronary heart disease, duodenal ulcer, schizophrenia, mental subnormality, suicide, accidents, and several other conditions.

### **Social and Behavioural Sciences:**

#### **Doctor-patient relationship:**

The nature of Doctor patient relationship is a debatable topic. If we just look at it from the physician’s point of view, it seems to be a secondary relationship because:

- It is a professional relationship, i.e. business deal.

- It starts from a particular date and it ends after the treatment is over.
- It is transferable.

However, if we consider the relationship from the point of view of the patient's psychology, the following points go in favor of a primary relationship. Though the relationship starts after a particular disease, it is often continuous in nature. Illness keeps on occurring frequently and, by and large, patients have a tendency not to change the doctor. Most people have their family doctors, the relation with whom is continuous.

- The doctor-patient relation is more than a mere professional or money relation. Without an element of emotion on the part of the doctor and without an element of faith on the part of the patient, the treatment cannot be fully successful.
- The relation is not transferable from the patient's point of view. For example, a patient wishes to see the same doctor on a follow-up visit even in a government hospital. If his own doctor is not available, a patient would prefer to visit again and see his earlier doctor rather than be seen by a new doctor on each visit.

### **Medical Sociology and Social Medicine:**

Disease is basically not being at ease, i.e. disease. In other words, it is a feeling of not being comfortable. The cause of discomfort or 'disease' need not always be physical or organic. It may be related to purely mental or social environmental factors such as a problem boss, colleague or subordinate. In spite of the advancement of scientific knowledge in the field of molecular biology, biotechnology, etc. we still do not know "*Why do people behave as they do*"?

There is massive food grain production at the global level, yet men are hungry. We have plenty of medicines, yet people are dying of disease. Technological advancement alone is not the complete solution. Science can give us medicines, but how to provide them to people is often a sociological issue. The effect of environment, including social environment, on human health has been known for centuries. However, the concern for

social factors in health got overshadowed with the emergence of the germ theory of disease. As infatuation with the germ theory subsided, it was noticed that:

- The major interest had been focussed upon the treatment of disease and not upon prevention of disease and promotion of health.
- Medical men were more interested in the classification of disease than in the real cause or causes of disease.
- Rather than being interested in the individual as a whole person, medical science was more interested in a component of the individual where the pathology was supposed to be located.
- There was more interest in the immediate effect of a disease rather than in the interrelation between disease and society.

In view of the above realizations, medical sociology developed as a special branch of sociology. The development of this branch was initiated by Charles McIntire in 1894. *Medical sociology* is defined as “Professional endeavor devoted to social epidemiology, the study of cultural factors and social relations in connection with illness and the social principles in medical organization and treatment”.

*Social medicine* has been defined as—”The study of the social, economical, environmental, cultural, psychological and genetic factors which have a bearing on the health of groups of individuals and individuals within these groups and, at the same time, with practical measures within the social field that may be taken to promote health, prevent disease and assist recovery of the sick.”

### **Social Causes of Disease:**

Causes of disease are often found to operate ultimately at the level of the society rather than an individual. Some examples of such causes are:

- Unhealthy habits of man such as indiscriminate and insanitary defecation, water pollution, drinking, drug abuse, etc.
- Unhealthy customs in families, castes or communities such

as dowry system, child marriage, propitiating gods and goddesses to control diseases, use of “holy” water of Ganga even if it is polluted, beliefs against family planning and immunization, etc. Cultural characters are transmitted from generation to generation and social pathology thus persists. By way of illustration, let us have a look at the problems of low birth weight, anemia in women and high maternal mortality. The physiopathology in these conditions may be diverse and complicated, but a common factor is early marriage among girls.

- Ineffective and defective laws, rules and regulations of local, state or national governments and international bodies. If the government does not provide physical amenities (such as clean water supply, disposal of wastes, housing), does not stop sale of unwholesome food or does not control traffic, there is bound to be ill health and disease. Maldistribution of wealth will affect the health of the poor. Lack of social security provided by the government will affect the health in times of want and old age.

### **Social Aspects of Treatment:**

Clinical treatment of any disease with drugs should be logically supplemented with social treatment or therapy as far as possible. When persons having hookworm disease in a community are given mebendazole, the people in the community should also be advised to use latrines and not to go barefooted in the fields. Similarly, treatment of a patient for chronic alcoholism should be supplemented by dealing with social causes which make a person an addict. Maternal and child health depends very much more on social care than medical care. A typical example of social therapy is that of a woman working in a factory who was injured a number of times on the machine. Her injury was treated by the usual dressing each time. Ultimately, the real cause was found to be her anxiety about three children below 6 years of age left at home. They were brought to the crèche and she never sustained injury in the factory again. It is evident that for promotion and protection of health and prevention and control of disease, social environment should be free from harmful agents. Some of

the important measures for providing healthy social environment are:

- Social security against fear and want, such as ESI scheme, old age pension, life insurance, provident fund and health and medical facilities or all.
- Fair distribution of food and other amenities of life such as housing.
- Facilities for exercise and leisure.
- Educational facilities for all.
- Propagation of healthy customs such as marriage, monogamy, religious faith, freedom of expression and thought, etc.
- Framing and enforcement of appropriate laws by the government for protection of property, life and honour.

It is in recognition of the importance of social factors in disease that medical social workers are appointed nowadays not only in departments of Preventive and Social Medicine but also in many clinical departments in the hospitals, particularly in leprosy, tuberculosis and STD clinics and in mental and cancer hospitals.

### **Social Environment and Health:**

So far we have discussed the role of social sciences in health. Some important public health problems related to lifestyle. In order to illustrate further the relation between social factors and health, some concrete examples are given below.

### **Economic Status and Road Accidents:**

Increased prosperity brings in its wake the “time is money” attitude. This results in altered perceptions of the space time economy. For example, a man ordinarily chooses the shortest of the various possible routes to a destination and travels at moderate speed so as to save energy. However, as he becomes richer, his concern shifts from saving petrol to saving time and he prefers to choose a longer route if he can drive on it extra fast. The result is fast driving and, consequently, higher accident rate. One of the reasons for higher road accident rate in Delhi is its higher per capita income, about four times the national average.

### **Socioeconomic Forces and Famine:**

Dr Amartya Sen, the internationally renowned economist, has established that famines are not caused by lack of food in a country. They are caused by lack of purchasing power in the hands of the poorest. The usual humanitarian urge to rush food to a country in times of crisis is often a failure. This is because several months elapse after the realization that a food crisis exists till the actual food supplies reach the starving people. This time is taken for food aid to be organized and supplies to be loaded, shipped and unloaded. Further inordinate delay causing loss of lives can occur if the country concerned is a dictatorship with news censorship and suppression of free communication. This happened in several African countries during last two decades. In China, during Mao's Great Leap Forward, 29 million people starved because communist party officials were afraid to tell Mao the real dimensions of the problem.

Drawing from the experience of several countries, Dr Sen has shown that merely rushing food aid does not suffice to avert a famine. The food thus rushed to the famine hit areas often finds its way back to the prosperous ones, as happened during the Ethiopian famine in 1970's. Interestingly, per capita availability of food in Maharashtra in 1970's was no more than in Ethiopia and was less than in Sahel, yet there was, in contrast, no mass starvation. The reasons was that while the relief efforts in Africa were confined to free food distribution, those in India used additional innovative approaches in the form of public employment programs which put cash in the hands of the needy. The market forces then operated on their own to move grains to the needy far more efficiently than any government machinery.

### **Cultural Practices and AIDS:**

The AIDS epidemic is fast spreading in the world, including India. However, its march in India especially in the early years, was slower than in many other countries. This is partly attributable to the social and cultural practices of the predominant middle class population, which cherishes monogamy as a virtue and frowns upon sexual promiscuity.

## **Sociopolitical Factors and Tobacco Deaths:**

The role of tobacco in causation of cancer (especially that of lung and oral cavity) and cardiovascular disease is well known. Smoking has been labelled as the silent and sure killer. Its prevalence is slowly declining in the West, but is increasing in the developing countries. This is because of social pressures upon the young to smoke (reinforced by high scale multimedia advertising) coupled with certain political considerations (appeasing the tobacco growers' lobby, reaping excise and sales tax revenue from cigarettes and protecting vested interests of the cigarette company barons). It may be mentioned that India is the third largest tobacco producer in the world. In the population above 15 years of age in India, the proportion of male and female smokers is 45% and 2.8% respectively with an overall proportion of 51% for those who chew tobacco. The WHO estimates that the number of cigarettes (including bidis) smoked worldwide is 6000 billion per year, amounting, on average, to one thousand per living human being per year. It is not surprising that more than 3 million people die annually of tobacco related diseases in the world.

## **Homelessness:**

Homelessness has major public health implications for not only those affected but also for the general population. Homeless people are potential reservoirs of infectious diseases like tuberculosis, AIDS, etc. Among the youths it leads to increased crime, substance abuse, etc. Health in homelessness state is compromised by physical environment including hazards of street life, poor nutrition, lack of facilities to maintain personal hygiene and increased risk of communicable diseases through crowding and enforced lifestyle. With the changing social and economic scenario, homelessness is likely to increase.

The Census of India (2001) uses the notion of 'houseless population', defined as persons who are not living in 'census houses' but are in houseless households. Houseless household has been defined as those who do not live in buildings or census houses but live in the open on roadside, pavements, in hume pipes, under flyovers and staircases, or in open in places of worship, railway platforms, etc.

## Discussion & Conclusion:

Social environment is as important as the physical and biological environments in relation to health and disease in man. The effect of social environment on health is clearly reflected in the differences in morbidity patterns of rural vs. urban areas and developing vs. developed countries. Many important public health problems are closely related to the lifestyles of people in different societies. Examples of such problems are obesity, coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, sexually transmitted disease, AIDS, psychiatric disorders, suicides, accidents, alcoholism, drug abuse and delinquency.

The term *social environment* denotes the complex of psychosocial factors influencing the health of the individual and the community. In view of the multiple nature of factors involved, it may be more appropriate to use the term *psychosocioeconomic environment*. This environment is unique to man and includes, cultural values, customs, habits, beliefs, attitudes, morals, religion, education, income, occupation, standard of living, community

It suggests that health is influenced by four sets of variables—individual predispositions, ecological predispositions, current circumstances, and opportunities. These variables are in turn influenced by the major sources of social changes: economic, political, educational and other systems. The health status of the people can feed back into and influence factors relating to social structure which may in turn influence the predisposing variables, and therefore health.

**Final words:** *“Health is NOT mainly an issue of doctors, social services and hospitals. It is an issue of social justice.”*

## Notes & References:

1. Roy R N, Saha I, Mahajan & Gupta; *Textbook of Preventive and Social Medicine*, Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd India, 2013:4: 126-137
2. K. Park; *Parks's Textbook of Preventive & Social Medicine*, M/S Banarsidas Bhanot Publishers, India, 2015:23: 668-704

3. Suryakantha A H; *Community Medicine with Recent Advances*, Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd India, 2017:4: 739-757
4. Patra S, Anand K. Homelessness; *A Hidden Public Health Problem*, Indian Journal of Public Health, 2008;52(3): 164-70.
5. Government of India. Census of India, 2001.



## **WORK CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUE OF ASSAM STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION (ASTC): A CASE STUDY**

**Lenin Gogoi\***

### **ABSTRACT**

Work Culture influences on the overall performance of an organization in one hand and employees play a vital role in constituting healthy work culture on the other. The norms and rules also determine the status of work culture of an organization. Assam State Transport Corporation is a Public Sector Undertaking, Government of Assam and it provides bus services to the people of Assam and its connected locations but many studies and reports have shown that the corporation has failed to produce quality services and to maintain a healthy work culture. Further it results in poor performance of the corporation and causes in dissatisfaction of consumers. This study attempts to understand the work culture and employee issue of ASTC following certain indicators. Based on the data collected from primary sources, the study finds that poor work culture exists in ASTC. The study also reveals that employees of ASTC are unhappy regarding many aspects such as salary, bonus, promotion etc. Thus, it reduces spirit of workings and it further causes in afflicted work culture of ASTC. Based on the findings, the study suggests for taking bold measures to encourage employees and to create a healthy work culture so that consumers can enjoy quality bus services under ASTC.

**Key Words:** Work Culture, Employee Issue, ASTC

### **Introduction**

The issue of governing Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) draws the attention of policy makers and the academicians because of the obvious reason of PSU's role in the development of a country. Different factors impact on the governance of PSUs such as work culture. Work culture refers to pattern of working of an institution. A healthy work culture gives job satisfaction to the employees and it can also grown employee

---

\* *Research Scholar, Deptt. of Political Science, Assam University Diphu Campus, Diphu*

productivity. It creates enjoyment at workplace. Similarly, sense of loyalty to the organization also depends on the status of work culture. So far as the issue of work culture is concerned, different employee related issues such as promotion, salary, training, bonus etc. also impact on the work culture at large.

Different theories of Public Administration provide different prescriptions for effective performance of organizations. New Public Management (NPM) theory emphasises on the adoption of private style of management in Public Sector Organizations (PSOs) to performing functions efficiently (Osborne, 1992). The advocate of Scientific Management Theory (SMT), Frederick Winslow Taylor (Taylor, 1911) has prescribed for adopting scientific principles in an organization to delivering services effectively. The advocates of Classical theory of organization such as Luther Gullick (Gullick, 1955), Urwick (Urwick, 1966) and Max Weber (Weber, 1965) have emphasised on certain principles and rules to perform functions of an organization effectively and efficiently. Decision Making Theory of Herbert A. Simon's (Simon, 1965) highlights the importance of decisions that have been taken in an organization. He identifies two major parts of a decision such as action and implementation. Elton Mayo (Mayo, 1933), through his Human Relations Theory (HRT), highlights the utility of man power in the growth of an organization. He prescribes for giving importance on the informal relations and human factor in the working of an organization.

Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU), Government of Assam, came into existence in the year 1970. Assam Road Transport Act, 1954 provides norms for governing the corporation. The corporation also follows the Road Transport Corporation Act of India, 1950. ASTC provides bus services to the people of Assam as well as to the connected places. A large numbers of people in Assam use Public Road Transport System to run their day to day works.

So far as the working of ASTC is concerned, different studies have highlighted various bottlenecks concerning the work culture issue of ASTC in particular and PSUs in general. Regarding the issue of employee's satisfaction, the Departmentally Related Standing Committee, Transport Department, Government of Assam (DRSC), 2014-15 has recommended that to developing the performance of ASTC and to clearing the outstanding

statutory dues such as dues to retired/expired employees, the support in terms of Non-Plan fund in the shape of grants in aid to ASTC is required to overcome present obstacles. Thus, it can be said that employees of ASTC have not got their dues in different regards. On the issue of workings of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), S.B. Medhi (Medhi, 2004) has indicated various problems regarding the working of the PSUs like bottlenecks in customer service quality. Work culture also influences on service delivery of an organization and it is reflected in the degree of satisfaction received by service recipients. ASTC, being a PSU, delivers bus services to the people of Assam and its connected regions and thus, this draws the attention of researchers to study the issue for the betterment of the society. B.L. Maheshwari (Maheshwari, 1981) finds that State Level Enterprises (SLEPs) have been dominated by politicians and officials. The author also mentions that their boards are ignorant, uninterested and ineffective in different regards. So far as the democratic welfare state is concerned, the politicians are always dominant in case of governing different sectors. Appointment of officials is also dependent on decision of elected houses of representatives because laws and regulations are made by the houses of representatives. Many a time, rules are broken and political figures influence on recruitment process. Thus, sometimes, absence of skilled labour results in poor service delivery to the consumers. COFR (cited in COFR, 2001) report highlights various bottlenecks of ASTC such as failure in management. It can be said that it is also responsible for poor performance of ASTC. So far as the governance of an organization is concerned, management is a part and parcel of the same. In the same way, status of work culture is also reflected in the efficiency in management of different works of an organization.

Thus, taking all these as backdrops, the present study intends to assess the working of the ASTC from two angles. Firstly, referring the theoretical prescriptions regarding the functioning of organizations, this study intends to understand application, utility and relevance of these perspectives. Secondly, based on the findings of different reports and studies, it seeks to examine certain variables such as work culture and employee issue. Hence, question can be raised how has been the work culture of Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) maintained? Simultaneously, another question can be raised i.e. are the employees of the ASTC satisfied working with the Corporation?

The present study follows certain indicators to understand the issue of employee's satisfaction such as promotion, training, bonus, leisure time, conference for updating knowledge, performance based remuneration, award for excellent work, passenger care education and transport management education. These parameters have helped to understand the level of employee's satisfaction as well as impact of the same on performance of an organization. The parameters such as office-time maintenance, time taken by the staff to completion the assign task, quality of employee behaviour, step taken to regulate employee's behaviour, punishment given for non-completion of works, training given for Improving work, submission of progress report by the employees, drug used by bus staff and staff behaviour have helped to understand the work culture issue of ASTC.

Out of eight divisions of ASTC, Guwahati & Lakhimpur divisions were randomly selected to collect primary data from the respondents. In the next step, two stations from each division have been randomly selected and bus spots were also randomly selected for data collection. Interview schedule has been used to collect data from the respondents. 100 respondents from the passengers have been purposively selected to conduct interview. In case of employees of ASTC, 40 respondents have been randomly selected for data collection.

The responses of the employees of ASTC have helped to understand different issues related to employees of the corporation. So far as the issue of work culture is concerned, the responses of both passengers and employees have helped to assess the pattern of workings of the corporation. Following sections deal with the analysis of findings of the study.

### **Job Satisfaction under ASTC**

So far as different theories of organization are concerned, the aspects such as incentives, promotion, leisure time etc. have influenced on the performance of an organization. Similarly proper execution of these aspects helps in increasing morale of employees for performing their level best and it also helps in creating a healthy and sound work culture within an organization. Following table shows certain facilities given to the employees of ASTC and the responses of the employee respondents on the facilities:

**Table 1: Employee’s View on Certain Facilities given to them under ASTC (In %)**

Sl. No	Issues	Availability (In%)		Response (In%)		
		Yes	No	Satisfactory	Manageable	Unsatisfactory
1	Promotion	72	28	20	50	30
2	Training	60	40	35	30	35
3	Bonus	35	65	20	60	20
4	Leisure time	40	60	35	45	20
5	Conference for updating knowledge	10	90	20	35	45
6	Performance based remuneration	05	95	10	45	45
7	Award for excellent work	05	95	05	30	65
8	Passenger care education	10	90	15	35	50
9	Transport Management education	05	95	20	50	30
10	Salary	NA	NA	25	45	30

**Source:** Data Collected from Respondents

Table no. 1 shows the responses of the respondents on certain facilities given to the employees of ASTC. The table reveals that except

the issues of promotion and training, majority of respondents have said that other facilities are not available for employees in ASTC such as leisure time, bonus, conference for updating knowledge etc. However, field observation shows that the facilities such as promotion have not been done on the basis performance/merit/seniority. In fact, political figures and higher authorities have always influenced on providing such facilities to the employees. The table also reveals that majority of the respondents are either manageable or dissatisfied on the issues mentioned in the table. Thus, it can be said that a large numbers of the employees are not happy in working with ASTC.

Different factors contribute to the growth of healthy work culture in an organization and a sound and healthy work culture encourages employees to work their level best to produce quality services in one hand and attract the consumers on the other. Job satisfaction is an issue which has also influenced on the work culture of an organization but field observation reveals that huge numbers of employees are not happy working with ASTC. It is come to know that many employees are still working under ASTC in order to maintain the social identity as a Government servant only. In reality, they are not happy working with ASTC and their level of job satisfaction is very low. The filed observation also finds that the higher authorities appointing in different divisions/stations of ASTC are also not happy working under the corporation because they don't get such facilities and respects which have been enjoying by other Government's employees of different Government's departments. Thus, it deprives the employees and it further affects in spirit of workings. It is realized that employee productivity as well as work culture have been also affected by such condition.

The field observation reveals communication gap between management and employees. It is realized that the employees working in different stations and sub-stations have not been frequently communicated by the concern authorities. Even different important matters related to different divisions/stations/sub-stations have not been shared with the employees of the concerned divisions/stations/sub-stations. On the other hand, many a time, works have been continued without informing the respective divisions/stations/sub-stations.

It is noticed that some employees are not adequately skilled to perform

their duties. Therefore, they cannot complete duties within stipulated time and sometimes it causes in delay of other related works. The field observation also finds that different senior employees cannot operate new technologies effectively. It also results in delay of works in the corporation.

The study also finds that concerned authorities from headquarters hardly visit different stations located in different places. It is also come to know that technical as well as mechanical problems of stations/sub-stations have not been seriously addressed by concerned cells/officials/authorities. The filed observations highlights that until the introduction of revitalization scheme, each and every stations had been provided equipments/machineries to repair buses of the corporation but these instruments had been theft by some unscrupulous officials lobbying with higher authorities and political figures. It is also noticed that no bold step has been taken to find out the criminals.

To executing functions of an organization effectively, it is very essential to encouraging employees to perform their level best. Different factors such as training, bonus, promotion etc. influence on creating healthy work culture, increasing efficiency of employees and to provide quality products and services to the consumers. After observing the table no. 1 and the field observation, it is realized that most of the employees of ASTC are not happy with the facilities given to them such as promotion, training, performance based remuneration etc. Thus, it can be said that it affects in employee productivity in the corporation and it further results in poor performance of the same. It is also understood that communication gap between employees, politicization of workings, malpractices etc. contributes to the growth of unhealthy work culture in the corporation. Following section provides a brief analysis of issues related to work culture of ASTC.

### **Work Culture Issue under ASTC**

Work culture of an organization can be examined through different parameters such as maintenance of office time schedule, completion of assigned task within the stipulated time frame, step taken to regulate employee's behaviour, punishment given for non-completion of works, training given for improving skill and submission of progress report by the employee. Following table shows the status of work culture of the ASTC following certain indicators:

**Table 2: Opinion of the Respondents on Certain Issues Related to Work Culture of ASTC**

Sl. No	Issues	Availability (In%)		Response (In%)		
		Yes	No	Satisfactory	Manageable	Unsatisfactory
1	Maintenance of office time	40	60	25	40	35
2	Completion of assigned task	NA	NA	30	40	30
3	Step taken to regulate employee's behaviour	20	80	25	50	25
4	Punishment given for non-completion of works	25	75	20	40	40
5	Training given for improving skill	30	70	15	50	35
6	Submission of progress report by the employee	35	65	35	50	15

**Source:** Data collected from Respondents

Table no. 2 provides the responses of the respondents on different issues of work culture of ASTC. On the issue of maintenance of office time, 60% of the respondents have found that employees of the ASTC don't maintain office time schedule and 40% of the respondents mention that it is manageable and for 35% of the respondents, it is unsatisfactory. Therefore, the table reveals that a large numbers of employees of ASTC don't maintain office time schedule and it further results in dissatisfaction of the passengers. Thus, by assessing the issue, it is realized that the respondents have found unpunctual employees working under ASTC who have not discharged their duties properly. On the other hand, it can be said that concerned authority has failed to regulate such employees in a strict hand and it further affects in overall performance of the corporation.

With regard to the issue of completion of assign task by the employees within the stipulated time, 40% of the respondents have mentioned that it is manageable for them and 30% of the respondents have been dissatisfied. The field observation reveals that sometimes, employees create delay to sort out different problems and works and it has irritated the consumers. It is also come to know that departmental works are also slowly addressed by many employees and it creates delay in solving different problems of the corporation.

On the issue of step taken to regulate employee's behaviour, 80% of the respondents have mentioned that no step has been taken by the concerned authority in this regard. On the other hand, 25% of the respondents have mentioned that it is unsatisfactory and 50% of the respondents have said that it is only manageable for them. With regard to the issue of punishment given for non-completion of works within stipulated time, 75% of the respondents have opined that no punishment has been imposed in this regard. The table shows that for 40% of the respondents, it is manageable and 40% of the respondents have viewed that it is unsatisfactory for them. On the issue of training given for improving skill of employees, 70% of the respondents have mentioned that no such training has been facilitated under the corporation. Other 30% of the respondents have opined that it is conducted by the corporation in different times. Simultaneously 50% of the respondents have been dissatisfied and for

35% of the respondents, it is unsatisfactory. On the issue of submission of progress report by the employees, 65% of the respondents have stated that it is not done by the employees of ASTC. The table also reveals that for 50% of the respondents, it is manageable and 15% of the respondents have opined that it is unsatisfactory.

The field observation reveals that there is big racket which has facilitated all kinds of misdeeds as well as malpractices in the corporation. It results in poor service delivery to the consumers in one hand and emergence of poor work culture on the other. Similarly, it is responsible for dilapidated conditions of different assets and services of ASTC.

The field observation reveals that along with the consumers, the retired employees of ASTC have also suffered from poor services of ASTC. The field observation also provides that concerned authority/staff always creates delay to meet consumers. Similarly, delay is being created to solve different works by the concerned authority.

By assessing the responses of the passengers, it is realized that poor work culture exists in ASTC regarding different issues such as maintenance of office time, completion of assigned task, step taken to regulate employee's behaviour, punishment given for non-completion of works, training given for improving skill and submission of progress report by the employee.

A large numbers of respondents don't have adequate idea on different issues related to good governance of an organization such as completion of assigned task during stipulated time, punishment given for non-completion of works, training given for improving skills of employees, time and development and submission of progress report by the employee.

Thus, it is realized that poor awareness of the consumers also contributes to the growth of poor work culture in the corporation in one hand and infrequent practice of different essential works such as conducting training to develop skills of employees, submission of progress report etc has made the consumers and a section of employees dark about such essential practices.

Following table shows the responses of the respondents on certain individual issues of employees of ASTC:

**Table 3: Responses of the Respondents on Certain Individual Issues of Employees of ASTC**

Sl. No.	Issues	Availability			Responses (In%)		
		Yes	No	Idea	Satisfactory	Manageable	Unsatisfactory
1	Drug used by bus staff	25	75	--	40	45	15
2	Staff behaviour	NA	NA	NA	25	60	15

Table no. 3 provides that according to 25% of the respondents, bus staff use to take drug materials during the working hours. The table also shows that for majority of the respondents, it is manageable and 15% of the respondents have mentioned that it is unsatisfactory. However, it is noticed in the table that majority of the respondents have found that bus staff of ASTC don't use to take drug materials while they are in office duty. With regard to the issue of staff behaviour of ASTC, the table shows that for 25% of the respondents, it is satisfactory for them. On the other hand, 60% of the respondents have stated that it is only manageable for them. Thus, by observing the table no. 4, it is realized that few bus employees of ASTC use to take drug materials such as alcohol while they are in their official duties.

**Concrete Findings of the Study**

From the above discussion, following concrete findings can be highlighted which are as follows:

(i) The study finds that most of the employees are dissatisfied on the available facilities for them such as bonus, promotion etc.

(ii) The study also highlights that non-availability of different aspects such as performance based remuneration and award for excellent work reduce work spirit of employees under ASTC.

(iii) The study finds that absence of passenger care education and transport management education results in poor service delivery to the consumers.

(iv) The study finds that office time schedule has not been followed by huge numbers of the employees. The study also reveals that that the concerned authority has failed to regulate the employees in a strict hand.

(v) The study provides that consumers and retired employees/workers have suffered from poor work culture of ASTC. It is come to know that consumers as well as employees have to wait for long time to meet the concerned authorities regarding different important matters.

(vi) The study reveals that concerned authority/staff creates delay in addressing different works and this situation has irritated the consumers of ASTC.

(vii) The study finds that large numbers of employees have not satisfied working with ASTC and they are unhappy in many regards such as lack of opportunity to exercise power based on poisons, no respect and dignity, poor coordination between higher and lower officials, poor communication between head quarters and sub-stations and son and so forth.

### **Conclusion**

This paper elaborates various aspects related to workings of the Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC). The study has been made to understand different issues related to work culture and employees of ASTC. On the basis of findings of the study, it is understood that employees of the corporation are not happy with the facilities given to them such as promotion, bonus, award providing for excellent work etc. It is also found that employees are not happy working with ASTC. The study finds that the

different aspects of work culture have not been maintained well and, thus it affects in performance of the corporation. Overall result of the primary data shows that there is need for improving work culture of ASTC for the betterment of performance of the corporation and to delivering services to the passengers effectively.

### Notes References:

1. Gulick, Luther, Next Steps in Public Management, *Public Administrative Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Spring, 1955.
2. Maheshwari, B.L, “State Level Public Enterprises: Issue of Autonomy and Performance”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November 28, 1981, Vol.16, No.48, pp. 165-171.
3. Mayo, Elton (1933); *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, New York: Macmillan Co.
4. Medhi, S.B, Governance of Public Sector Undertaking in Assam, *Dialouge*, **April - June, 2004, Volume 5, No. 4.**
5. Osborn, David, Ted Gaebler (1992); *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Reading Mass: Addison-Wesley
6. Simon, Herbert (1965); *Administrative Behaviour*, New York: The Free Press.
7. Taylor, Frederick Winslow (1911); *The Principles of Scientific Management*, London, UK: Harper & Brothers.
8. Urwick, Lyndall, “Public Administration and Business Management, in C.E Hawley and R. Weintraub (Eds), *Administrative Questions and Political Answers* (New York: Nan Nostrand, 1966, pp. 39-40
9. Webber, M. (1965); *Politics as a Vocation*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
10. “State Transport Staff Seek Former Glory”, *The Telegraph*, Guwahati, Dec., 28, 2015.
11. Departmental Related Standing Committee, Assam, 2014-15.
12. Audit Report, Government of Assam, 2006.

13. Economic Survey of Assam, 2010-11.
14. Certificate of Financial Responsibility (COFR), 2001 accessed from <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://dpeasom.gov.in/recommend-fiscal.html> dated 10.01.2016

